

The RED BOOK Magazine

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Divine Curiosity

By M. MERCER KENDIG, B. A.

Director, Department of Education, THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

"CURIOSITY killed a cat" says the old adage. "Satisfaction brought it back," replies ardent if impertinent youth. For curiosity is the essence of the mind of youth, wondering and reaching out to find the why and wherefore of itself and the world. And it is this attitude of mind carried over into maturity which holds the secret of the famous men and women who have contributed most to the world's progress. In such people, curiosity has been sublimated to a disciplined and constructive force for the service of mankind.

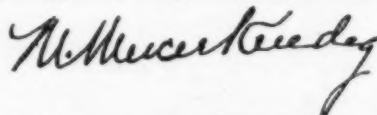
Back of every outward movement of thought and knowledge there has surged this force of *divine curiosity*. Were it not for this craving in the minds of people to know and understand and feel and see beyond the barriers of previous experience, we might still be living in thirteen states along the Atlantic seaboard. This is the force that urged the pioneers across the Alleghenies and the Rockies.

But, most essentially, is curiosity the wellspring of Education. When normal childhood asks *why*, it voices an instinctive reaching out for facts. It is the cry of its budding intelligence for a pilot down the river of the world's accumulated knowledge. To the understanding parent and teacher youth's *why* is an opportunity and a call to duty. They know that *curiosity* is the motive force of education. It will dribble away in lost interest when adult indifference and irritation are turned to its questioning. Many embryo discoverers and inventors have been snuffed out with the idea "Children should be seen and not heard." Such lack of understanding takes its toll of the child's interest in this wonderful world and fills it with dull, uninterested, uninteresting men and women.

The difference between *education* and *schooling* as it affects the personal development of the boy or girl is all the difference between the joy of the sweating football player with every inch of himself in the game, and the shivering spectator whose only contribution is the price of a windy stadium seat.

In the development of the minds and characters of boys and girls, *curiosity* represents an instinctive craving for knowledge akin to the body's craving for food and warmth. Qualified Private Schools and Summer Camps under skillful and sympathetic direction recognize this great force for self-development in education. They are organized to stimulate and capitalize it to the utmost. Because they can prescribe the numbers and quality of their students and campers, they therefore offer an ideally controlled environment for unhurried and sympathetic guidance for each expanding curiosity. Thoughtful parents should realize that this *curiosity* is a force worthy of such preservation.

During the last decade Private Schools and Camps of high ideals have multiplied. The members of this department have traveled thousands of miles to see and record their qualifications. We urge all parents to carefully study the institution to which they intend entrusting a boy or girl. Our experience is at all times available to our readers without charge. If you are experiencing difficulty in finding the right school or camp, write us a letter, giving the essential information about the boy or girl, and the details of location, charges, and type of instruction desired. We will promptly supply the required information.



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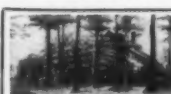
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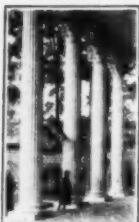
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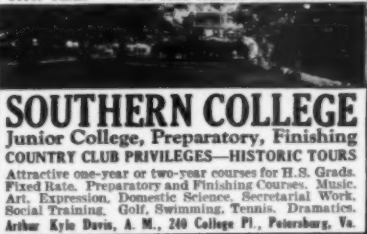
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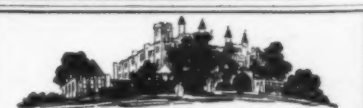
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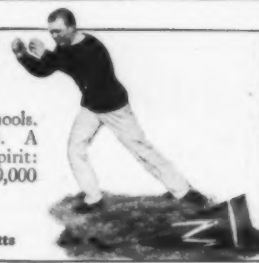
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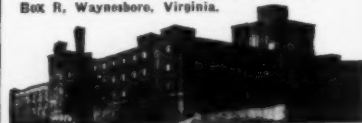
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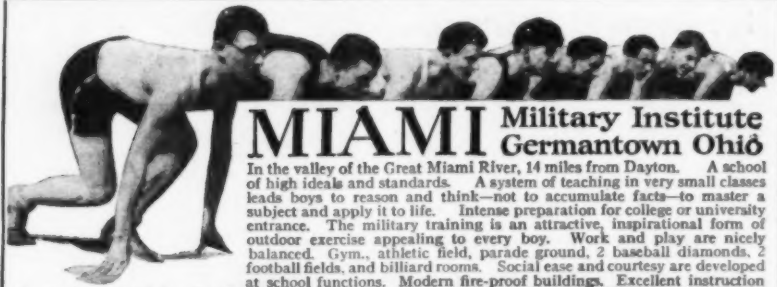
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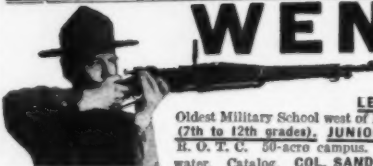
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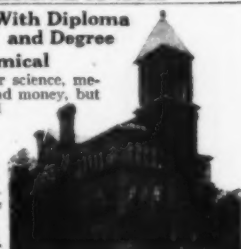
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LUCREZIA BORI
*Famous Operatic Star of the Metropolitan Opera,
New York, as "Salud" in "La Vida Breve"*

Photograph by Strauss-Peyton, New York



CHARLOTTE AYERS
Danseuse in "May Flowers"

Photograph by DeBarron Studios, New York



OLIVE BORDEN
Film Star
Photograph by Max Autrey



DOROTHY MACKAILL
Film Star

Photograph by G. Mallard Kemler, N. Y. New York



HARRIET KRAUTH
Film Star

Photograph by Edward Thayer Monroe, New York

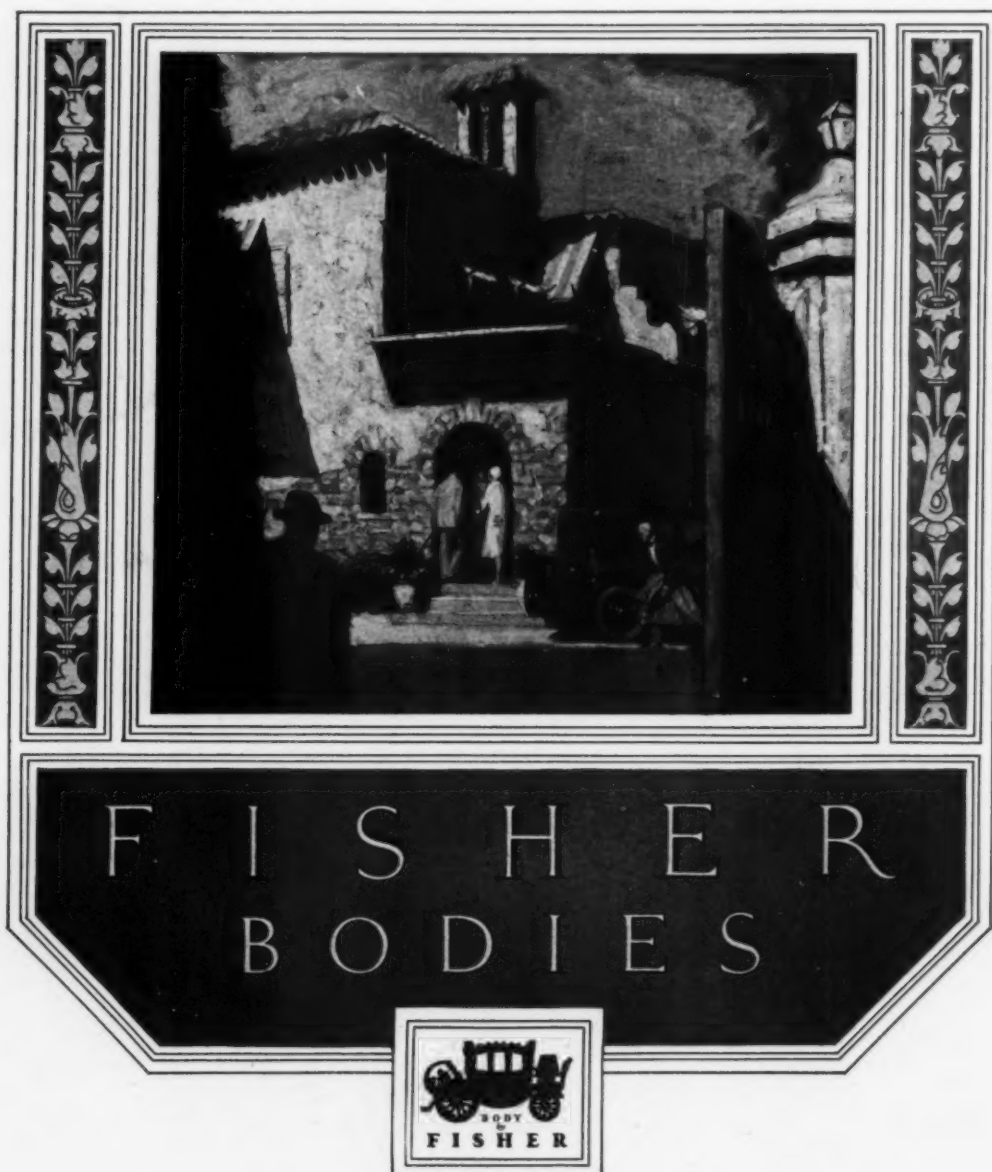


JEANNETTE MAC DONALD
in "Tip Toes"

Photograph by Straus-Peyton, New York



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OF UNIVERSAL PUBLIC PREFERENCE FOR CARS
THAT DISPLAY THE EMBLEM—BODY BY FISHER



A Private View

by Angelo Patri

Decoration by Franklin Booth

A MASTERPIECE is rarely come by, and very precious. Even the knowledge of its existence brings a spiritual lift. I am inviting you to a private view of some that hang in my gallery:

At half after seven, Mary comes down the hill to meet the trolley car. The precise instant of her appearance on the brow of the hill is marked by the mad scurry of a liver-spotted dog to make the corner in time to meet her. Close behind him, but more decorously, as becomes her sex and dignity, follows a cat, purring like a well-warmed tea-kettle.

Mary greets them with pats and kind words and tidbits from her old black bag. And as Mary boards the car, the two sit on guard watching for the final flicker of her shawl. An old woman in wrinkled and faded black, a nondescript pup and a cat: but the lighting in that picture comes from an old master.

At the farther end of my trip is deaf old Mac of the news-stand. All day he listens to the stories of those who file past his stand, shares the hopes, the denunciations, the jokes they shout into his cupped ear.

The best view is that of him and Panitello as they bend over the dog book. Panitello is just eleven, the last of a brood of fourteen—so of course buying the magazine is out of the question. Fine composition, that—and again the lighting is masterly. Such tenderness in the dim old eyes, such eager affection in the bright young ones. Great work.

Once a year there comes into my office a gracious presence, "A Lady of the Old School," a masterpiece in which light and shadow mingle and triumph as pure light.

"For some child that has a great need," she whispers—and is gone as if wafted off on a chariot cloud.

My gallery is full to overflowing with the masterpieces of simple, loving, everyday people whose names will never appear on any scroll of earth. Long ago they learned the secret of mixing the harsh elements of life into something rich and fine, and spreading them in forms of touching beauty. Tears and smiles are their mediums, and they use them with sure hands and high hearts.



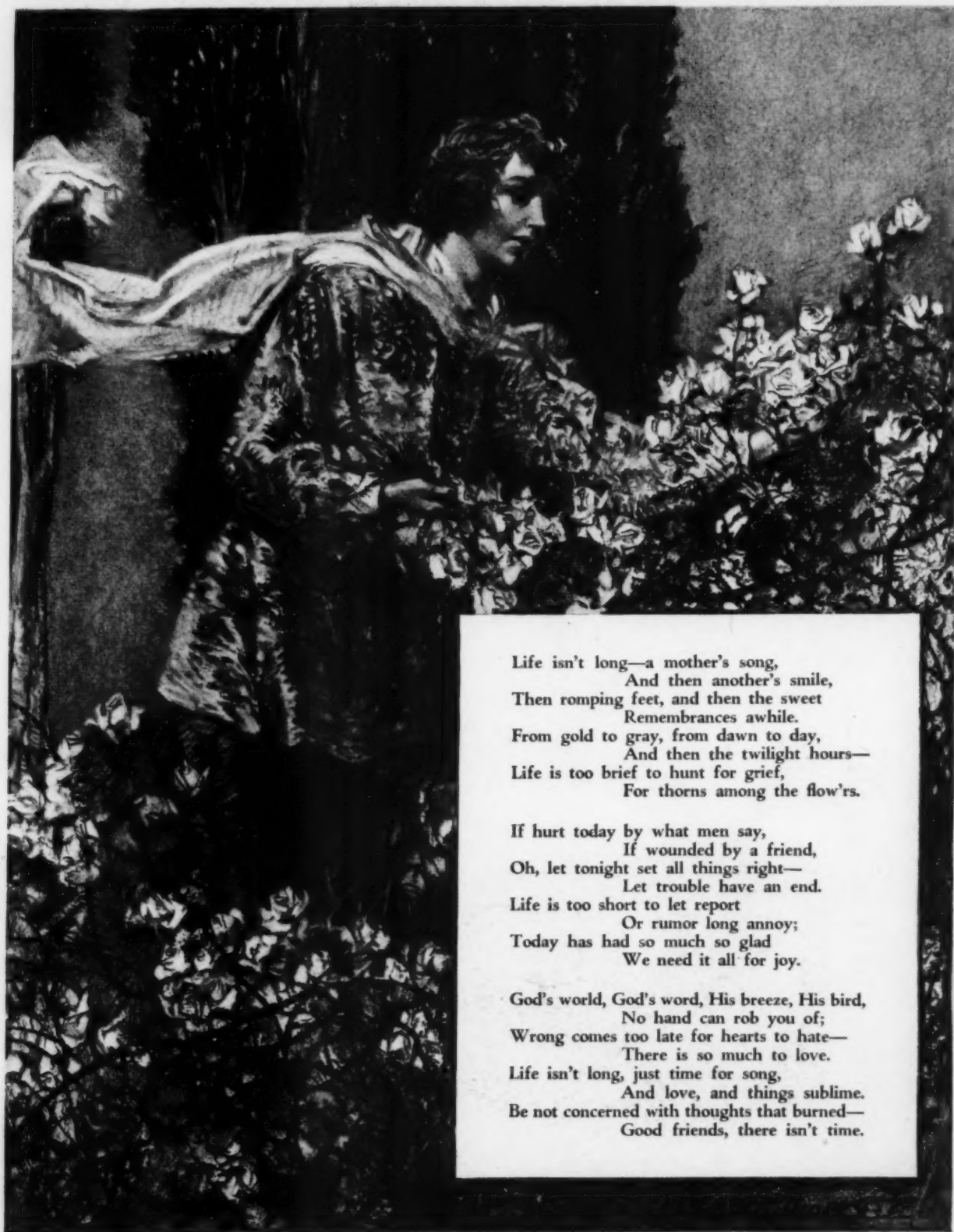


There Isn't Time

by Douglas Malloch



Decoration by John Scott Williams



Life isn't long—a mother's song,
And then another's smile,
Then romping feet, and then the sweet
Remembrances awhile.
From gold to gray, from dawn to day,
And then the twilight hours—
Life is too brief to hunt for grief,
For thorns among the flow'rs.

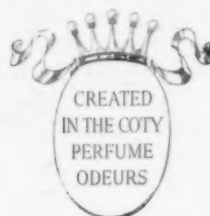
If hurt today by what men say,
If wounded by a friend,
Oh, let tonight set all things right—
Let trouble have an end.
Life is too short to let report
Or rumor long annoy;
Today has had so much so glad
We need it all for joy.

God's world, God's word, His breeze, His bird,
No hand can rob you of;
Wrong comes too late for hearts to hate—
There is so much to love.
Life isn't long, just time for song,
And love, and things sublime.
Be not concerned with thoughts that burned—
Good friends, there isn't time.



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is upon soft clear skin, deli-
cately glowing — such beauty as
COTY Face Powders give to the
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are but the natural reward
of youth safeguarded, as
thousands will tell you,
in this simple way

YOUTHFUL charm lost is the supreme tragedy in a woman's life. For once lost, it rarely is regained. But youth retained, as experts know and urge, is quite a different matter. That *can* be done and *is* being done by women everywhere today. Start now with the simple skin care printed at the right. What comes in youthful charm and skin clearness will amaze you.

YOUTH at forty means caution at twenty, *extreme* care through the thirties...and rigid avoidance of untried ways every day of one's life.

Thus modern beauty culture turns now to natural means, and frowns on the artificial and often dangerous ways of yesterday.

The scientific skin care of today starts with the proved doctrine of pores kept open, of the skin cleansed daily with the balmy lather of Palmolive.

It is a simple method, but *certain* in results, and what it is bringing to millions, it will bring to you.

This is the method. Follow it, please, for one week... note the difference then

Wash your face gently with soothing Palmolive. Then massage it softly into the skin. Rinse thoroughly, first with

warm water, then with cold. If your skin is inclined to be dry, apply a touch of good cold cream—that is all. Do this regularly, and particularly in the evening.

Use powder and rouge if you wish. But never leave them on over night. They clog the pores, often enlarge them. Blackheads and disfigurements often follow. They must be washed away.

Avoid this mistake

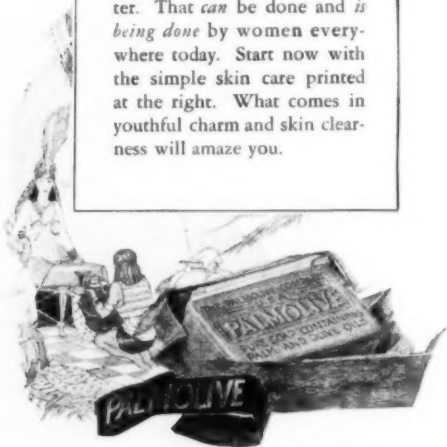
Do not use ordinary soaps in the treatment given above. Do not think any green soap, or represented as of olive and palm oils, is the same as Palmolive.

And it costs but 10c the cake!—so little that millions let it do for their bodies what it does for their faces. Obtain a cake today. Then note what an amazing difference one week makes.

THE PALMOLIVE COMPANY (Del. Corp.), CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

3226

Retail Price **10c** Palmolive Soap is untouched by human hands until you break the wrapper—it is never sold unwrapped



A COMMON-SENSE EDITORIAL

By BRUCE BARTON

Faces

ABOUT ten years ago a brilliant young fellow was elected to the United States Senate from a Western State. He had some sort of idealistic scheme on which he wanted publicity, and he asked me to visit him in Washington.

I found a very attractive boyish face, rosy cheeks, and eyes that were frank and enthusiastic.

The next time I saw him was seven years later. He had passed through a campaign for re-election and had borne the daily agony of the office-seekers, contract-seekers and favor-seekers of all kinds who flocked to Washington during the war.

The change in him was almost startling. His cheeks were fatter and flabbier; his smile, like that of a chorus girl, had become automatic, and there were lines of craftiness about the corners of his mouth. What seven years before had been a face of genuine kindness had become a mask of self-protection against the ceaseless assaults of insincerity. The two contrasting pictures of him have stayed in my memory, a tragic record of what politics can do to a face.

Some weeks ago a motion-picture director was talking to me about a star, a woman who once was a national favorite, a sure success in every picture.

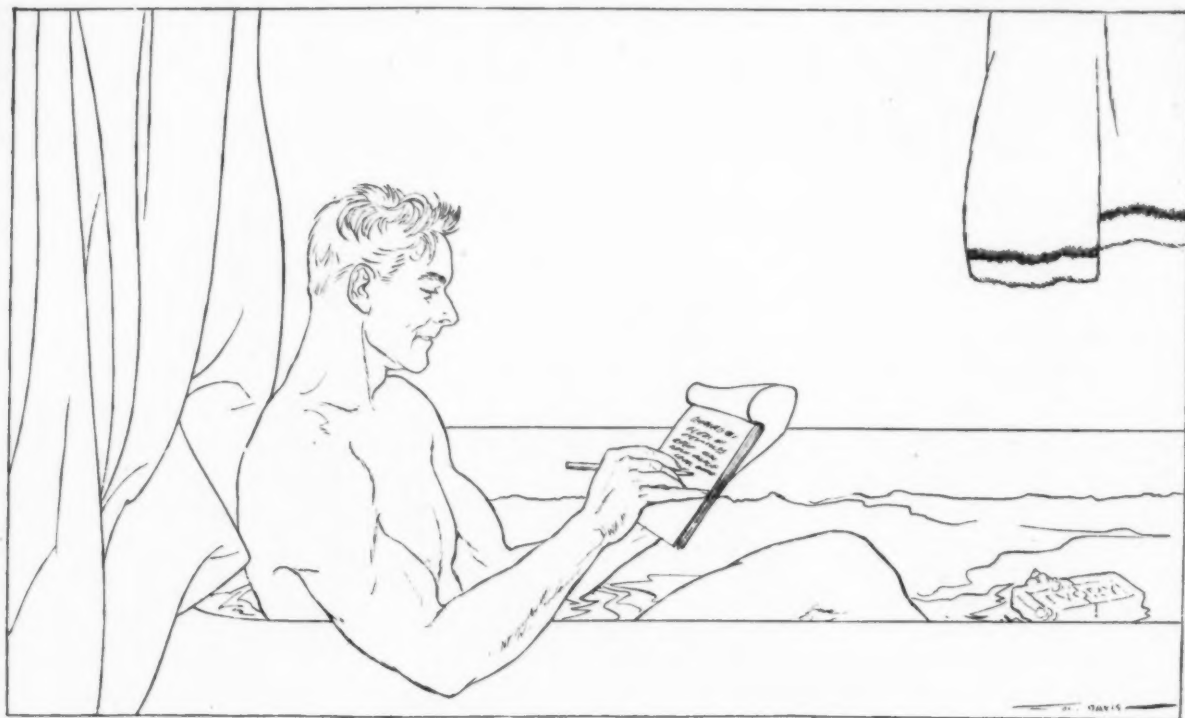
"She's losing her pull," he said sadly. "Why?"

"Oh, she's getting a little old and tired," he answered. "She's changed inside, and people sense it, though they don't understand why. But I know. A woman simply can't think about money all the time without having it show in her face."

Have you ever studied the photographs of Lincoln, those rugged cheeks, lined like a battle map; those deep, dark eyes that seem like reservoirs of sadness into which the sufferings of a whole nation had poured? Have you ever noticed the faces of old preachers and priests? Having cast their burdens upon the Lord and freed their minds from all worry about earthly affairs, they often keep the smooth clear look of boyhood to the very end.

It was Seward, I think, who once exclaimed: "Don't tell me a man isn't responsible for his face; the man of fifty is responsible for his face."

If that be true, if the face really be a sensitive record of the mind and heart, what secrets can you read as you walk the streets! What a lot of kindness and quiet courage is hidden in human lives! And what a lot of men there are who ought to be arrested on the strength of their looks!



Spring final examination

COURSE: *Bathing II (Morning & Evening)*

INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE: *This examination is conducted under the honor system and answers may be written in the bathroom.*

1 If you waste 5 to 10 minutes in the morning chasing an elusive cake of sinker-soap along the tub-bottom, what happens to a soft-boiled egg for breakfast?

2 One man sings while he bathes; another sputters in wrath. What soap does each use, and why?

3 Of the fifty-five good reasons for using Ivory Soap in the bath, which comes next in importance after "It floats"?

4 Bathers for nearly fifty years have compared Ivory lather to (a) clouds, (b) foam, (c) whipped cream. Can you think of a better comparison? (A correct answer to this question insures a passing mark in the examination.)

5 If an airplane travels at the rate of 3 miles per minute, how much faster does Ivory lather rinse off?

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The RED BOOK Magazine

June 1926 • Volume XLVII • Number 2

KARL EDWIN HARRIMAN, *Editor*

EDGAR SISSON, *Associate Editor*

The Dance

By
F. Scott
Fitzgerald

NO recent volume of short stories by an American author has attracted more critical praise than that recently published by F. Scott Fitzgerald, which contains the tales he has latterly written for this magazine. And now he tells another of a different sort—a drama of a country-club in a small Southern city.

Illustrated by
Lester Ralph

ALL my life I have had a rather curious horror of small towns: not suburbs; they are quite a different matter—but the little lost cities of New Hampshire and Georgia and Kansas, and upper New York. I was born in New York City, and even as a little girl I never had any fear of the streets or the strange foreign faces—but on the occasions when I've been in the sort of place I'm referring to, I've been oppressed with the consciousness that there was a whole hidden life, a whole series of secret implications, significances and terrors, just below the surface, of which I knew nothing. In the cities everything good or bad eventually comes out, comes out of people's hearts, I mean. Life moves about, moves on, vanishes. In the small towns—those of between five and twenty-five thousand people—old hatreds, old and unforgotten affairs, ghostly scandals and tragedies, seem un-



In the card-room stood Charley's fiancée and Joe Cable, absorbed in a kiss.

able to die, but live on all tangled up with the natural ebb and flow of outward life.

Nowhere has this sensation come over me more insistently than in the South. Once out of Atlanta and Birmingham and New Orleans, I often have the feeling that I can no longer communicate with the people around me. The men and the girls speak a language wherein courtesy is combined with violence, fanatic morality with corn-drinking recklessness, in a fashion which I can't understand. In "Huckleberry Finn" Mark Twain described some of those towns perched along the Mississippi River, with their fierce feuds and their equally fierce revivals—and some of them haven't fundamentally changed beneath their new surface of flivvers and radios. They are deeply uncivilized to this day.

I speak of the South because it was in a small Southern city of this type that I once saw the surface crack for a minute and something savage, uncanny and frightening rear its head. Then the surface closed again—and when I have gone back there since, I've been surprised to find myself as charmed as ever by the magnolia trees and the singing darkies in the street and the sensuous warm nights. I have been charmed, too, by the bountiful hospitality and the languorous easy-going outdoor life and the almost

universal good manners. But all too frequently I am the prey of a vivid nightmare that recalls what I experienced in that town five years ago.

Davis—that is not its real name—has a population of about twenty thousand people, one-third of them colored. It is a cotton-mill town, and the workers of that trade, several thousand gaunt and ignorant “poor whites,” live together in an ill-reputed section known as “Cotton Hollow.” The population of Davis has varied in its seventy-five years. Once it was under consideration for the capital of the State, and so the older families and their kin form a proud little aristocracy, even when individually they have sunk to destitution.

That winter I'd made the usual round in New York until about April, when I decided I never wanted to see another invitation again. I was tired and I wanted to go to Europe for a rest; but the baby panic of 1921 hit Father's business, and so it was suggested that I go South and visit Aunt Musidora Hale instead.

Vaguely I imagined that I was going to the country, but on the day I arrived, the *Davis Courier* published a hilarious old picture of me on its society page, and I found I was in for another season. On a small scale, of course: there were Saturday-night dances at the little country-club with its nine-hole golf-course, and some informal dinner parties and several attractive and attentive boys. I didn't have a dull time at all, and when after three weeks I wanted to go home, it wasn't because I was bored. On the contrary I wanted to go home because I'd allowed myself to get rather interested in a good-looking young man named Charley Kincaid, without realizing that he was engaged to another girl.

We'd been drawn together from the first because he was almost the only boy in town who'd gone North to college, and I was still young enough to think that America revolved around Harvard and Princeton and Yale. He liked me too—I could see that; but when I heard that his engagement to a girl named Marie Bannerman had been announced six months before, there was nothing for me except to go away. The town was too small to avoid people, and though so far there hadn't been any talk, I was sure that—well, that if we kept meeting, the emotion we were beginning to feel would somehow get into words. I'm not mean enough to take a man away from another girl.

Marie Bannerman was almost a beauty. Perhaps she would have been a beauty if she'd had any clothes, and if she hadn't used bright pink rouge in two high spots on her cheeks and powdered her nose and chin to a funereal white. Her hair was shining black; her features were lovely; and an affection of one eye kept it always half-closed and gave an air of humorous mischief to her face.

I was leaving on a Monday, and on Saturday night a crowd



of us dined at the country-club as usual before the dance. There was Joe Cable, the son of a former governor, a handsome, dissipated and yet somehow charming young man; Catherine Jones, a pretty, sharp-eyed girl with an exquisite figure, who under her rouge might have been any age from eighteen to twenty-five; Marie Bannerman; Charley Kincaid; myself and two or three others.

I loved to listen to the genial flow of bizarre neighborhood anecdote at this kind of party. For instance, one of the girls, together with her entire family, had that afternoon been evicted from her house for nonpayment of rent. She told the story wholly without self-consciousness, merely as something troublesome but amusing. And I loved the banter which presumed every girl to be infinitely beautiful and attractive, and every man to have been secretly and hopelessly in love with every girl present from their respective cradles.

"We liked to die laughin'" . . . "—said he was fixin' to shoot him without he stayed away." The girls "clared to heaven;" the men "took oath" on inconsequential statements. "How come you nearly about forgot to come by for me—" and the incessant Honey, Honey, Honey, Honey, until the word seemed to roll like a genial liquid from heart to heart.

Outside, the May night was hot, a still night, velvet, soft-pawed, splattered thick with stars. It drifted heavy and sweet into the



She turned toward him, snapped out, "Didn't you hear me say no?" and then, surprisingly, slapped his face.

large room where we sat and where we would later dance, with no sound in it except the occasional long crunch of an arriving car on the drive. Just at that moment I hated to leave Davis as I never had hated to leave a town before—I felt that I wanted to spend my life in this town, drifting and dancing forever through these long, hot, romantic nights.

Yet horror was already hanging over that little party, was waiting tensely among us, an uninvited guest, and telling off the hours until it could show its pale and blinding face. Beneath the chatter and laughter something was going on, something secret and obscure that I didn't know.

Presently the colored orchestra arrived, followed by the first trickle of the dance crowd. An enormous red-faced man in muddy knee boots and with a revolver strapped around his waist, clumped in and paused for a moment at our table before going upstairs to the locker-room. It was Bill Abercrombie, the sheriff, the son of Congressman Abercrombie. Some of the boys asked him half-whispered questions, and he replied in an attempt at an undertone.

"Yes. . . . He's in the swamp all right; farmer saw him near the crossroads store. . . . Like to have a shot at him myself."

I asked the boy next to me what was the matter.

"Nigger case," he said, "over in Kisco, about two miles from here. He's hiding in the swamp, and they're going in after him tomorrow."

"What'll they do to him?"

"Hang him, I guess."

The notion of the forlorn darky crouching dismally in a desolate bog waiting for dawn and death depressed me for a moment. Then the feeling passed and was forgotten.

After dinner Charley Kincaid and I walked out on the veranda—he had just heard that I was going away. I kept as close to the others as I could, answering his words but not his eyes—something inside me was protesting against leaving him on such a casual note. The temptation was strong to let something flicker up between us here at the end. I wanted him to kiss me—my heart promised that if he kissed me, just once, it would ac-

cept with equanimity the idea of never seeing him any more; but my mind knew it wasn't so.

The other girls began to drift inside and upstairs to the dressing-room to improve their complexions, and with Charley still beside me, I followed. Just at that moment I wanted to cry—perhaps my eyes were already blurred, or perhaps it was my haste lest they should be, but I opened the door of a small card-room by mistake, and with my error the tragic machinery of the night began to function. In the card-room, not five feet from us, stood Marie Bannerman, Charley's fiancée, and Joe Cable. They were in each other's arms, absorbed in a passionate and oblivious kiss.

I closed the door quickly, and without glancing at Charley opened the right door and ran upstairs.

A FEW minutes later Marie Bannerman entered the crowded dressing-room. She saw me and came over, smiling in a sort of mock despair, but she breathed quickly, and the smile trembled a little on her mouth.

"You won't say a word, honey, will you?" she whispered.

"Of course not." I wondered how that could matter, now that Charley Kincaid knew.

"Who else was it that saw us?"

"Only Charley Kincaid and I."

"Oh!" She looked a little puzzled; then she added: "He didn't wait to say anything, honey. When we came out, he was just going out the door. I thought he was going to wait and romp all over Joe."

"How about his romping all over you?" I couldn't help asking.

"Oh, he'll do that." She laughed wryly. "But, honey, I know how to handle him. It's just when he's first mad that I'm scared of him—he's got an awful temper." She whistled reminiscently. "I know, because this happened once before."

I wanted to slap her. Turning my back, I walked away on the pretext of borrowing a pin from Katie, the negro maid. Catherine Jones was claiming the latter's attention with a short gingham garment which needed repair.

"What's that?" I asked.

"Dancing-dress," she answered shortly, her mouth full of pins. When she took them out, she added: "It's all come to pieces—I've used it so much."

"Are you going to dance here tonight?"

"Going to try."

Somebody had told me that she wanted to be a dancer—that she had taken lessons in New York.

"Can I help you fix anything?"

"No, thanks—unless—can you sew? Katie gets so excited Saturday night that she's no good for anything except fetching pins. I'd be everlasting grateful to you, honey."

I had reasons for not wanting to go downstairs just yet, and so I sat down and worked on her dress for half an hour. I wondered if Charley had gone home, if I would ever see him again—I scarcely dared to wonder if what he had seen would set him free, ethically. When I went down finally he was not in sight.

The room was now crowded; the tables had been removed and dancing was general. At that time, just after the war, all Southern boys had a way of agitating their heels from side to side, pivoting on the ball of the foot as they danced, and to acquiring this accomplishment I had devoted many hours. There were plenty of stags, almost all of them cheerful with corn-liquor; I refused on an average at least two drinks a dance. Even when it is mixed with a soft drink, as is the custom, rather than gulped from the neck of a warm bottle, it is a formidable proposition. Only a few girls like Catherine Jones took an occasional sip from some boy's flask down at the dark end of the veranda.

I LIKED Catherine Jones—she seemed to have more energy than these other girls, though Aunt Musidora sniffed rather contemptuously whenever Catherine stopped for me in her car to go to the movies, remarking that she guessed "the bottom rail had gotten to be the top rail now." Her family were "new and common," but it seemed to me that perhaps her very commonness was an asset. Almost every girl in Davis confided in me at one time or another that her ambition was to "get away and come to New York," but only Catherine Jones had actually taken the step of studying stage dancing with that end in view.

She was often asked to dance at these Saturday night affairs, something "classic" or perhaps an acrobatic clog—on one memorable occasion she had annoyed the governing board by a "shimee" (then the scapegrace of jazz), and the novel and somewhat startling excuse made for her was that she was "so tight she didn't know what she was doing, anyhow." She impressed me as

a curious personality, and I was eager to see what she would produce tonight.

At twelve o'clock the music always ceased, as dancing was forbidden on Sunday morning. So at eleven-thirty a vast fan-faronade of drum and cornet beckoned the dancers and the couples on the verandas, and the ones in the cars outside, and the stragglers from the bar, into the ballroom. Chairs were brought in and galloped up *en masse* and with a great racket to the slightly raised platform. The orchestra had evacuated this and taken a place beside. Then, as the rearward lights were lowered, they began to play a tune accompanied by a curious drum-beat that I had never heard before, and simultaneously Catherine Jones appeared upon the platform. She wore the short, country girl's dress upon which I had lately labored, and a wide sunbonnet under which her face, stained yellow with powder, looked out at us with rolling eyes and a vacant negroid leer. She began to dance.

I had never seen anything like it before, and until five years later I wasn't to see it again. It was the Charleston—it must have been the Charleston. I remember the double drum-beat like a shouted "Hey! Hey!" and the unfamiliar swing of the arms and the odd knock-kneed effect. She had picked it up, heaven knows where.

Her audience, familiar with negro rhythms, leaned forward eagerly—even to them it was something new, but it is stamped on my mind as clearly and indelibly as though I had seen it yesterday. The figure on the platform swinging and stamping, the excited orchestra, the waiters grinning in the doorway of the bar, and all around, through many windows, the soft languorous Southern night seeping in from swamp and cottonfield and lush foliage and brown, warm streams. At what point a feeling of tense uneasiness began to steal over me I don't know. The dance could scarcely have taken ten minutes; perhaps the first beats of the barbaric music disquieted me—long before it was over, I was sitting rigid in my seat, and my eyes were wandering here and there around the hall, passing along the rows of shadowy faces as if seeking some security that was no longer there.

I'm not a nervous type; nor am I given to panic; but for a moment I was afraid that if the music and the dance didn't stop, I'd be hysterical. Something was happening all about me. I knew it as well as if I could see into these unknown souls. Things were happening, but one thing especially was leaning over so close that it almost touched us, that it did touch us. . . . I almost screamed as a hand brushed accidentally against my back.

THE music stopped. There was applause and protracted cries of encore, but Catherine Jones shook her head definitely at the orchestra leader and made as though to leave the platform. The appeals for more continued—again she shook her head, and it seemed to me that her expression was rather angry. Then a strange incident occurred. At the protracted pleading of some one in the front row, the colored orchestra leader began the vamp of the tune, as if to lure Catherine Jones into changing her mind. Instead she turned toward him, snapped out, "Didn't you hear me say no?" and then, surprisingly, slapped his face. The music stopped, and an amused murmur terminated abruptly as a muffled but clearly audible shot rang out.


Immediately we were on our feet, for the sound indicated that it had been fired within or near the house. One of the chaperons gave a little scream, but when some wag called out, "Caesar's in that henhouse again," the momentary alarm dissolved into laughter. The club manager, followed by several curious couples, went out to have a look about, but the rest were already moving around the floor to the strains of "Good Night, Ladies," which traditionally ended the dance.

I was glad it was over. The man with whom I had come went to get his car, and calling a waiter, I sent him for my golf-clubs, which were in the stack upstairs. I strolled out on the porch and waited, wondering again if Charley Kincaid had gone home.

Suddenly I was aware, in that curious way in which you become aware of something that has been going on for several minutes, that there was a tumult inside. Women were shrieking; there was a cry of "Oh, my God!" then the sounds of a stampede on the inside stairs, and footsteps running back and forth across the ballroom. A girl appeared from somewhere and pitched forward in a dead faint—almost immediately another girl did the same, and I heard a frantic male voice shouting into a telephone. Then, hatless and pale, a young man rushed out on the porch, and with hands that were cold as ice, seized my arm.

"What is it?" I cried. "A fire? What's happened?"

"Marie Bannerman's dead upstairs in the women's dressing-room. Shot through the throat!"



A moment later
Charley Kincaid
came out between
the Sheriff and an-
other man.

THE rest of that night is a series of visions that seem to have no connection with one another, that follow each other with the sharp instantaneous transitions of scenes in the movies. There was a group who stood arguing on the porch, in voices now raised, now hushed, about what should be done and how every waiter in the club, "even old Moses," ought to be given the third degree tonight. That a "nigger" had shot and killed Marie Bannerman was the instant and unquestioned assumption—in the first unreasoning instant, anyone who doubted it would have been under suspicion. The guilty one was said to be Katie Golstien, the colored maid, who had discovered the body and fainted. It was said to be "that nigger they were looking for over near Kisco." It was any darky at all.

Within half an hour people began to drift out, each with his little contribution of new discoveries. The crime had been committed with Sheriff Abercrombie's gun—he had hung it, belt and

all, in full view on the wall before coming down to dance. It was missing—they were hunting for it now. Instantly killed, the doctor said—bullet had been fired from only a few feet away.

Then a few minutes later another young man came out and made the announcement in a loud, grave voice:

"They've arrested Charley Kincaid."

My head reeled. Upon the group gathered on the veranda fell an awed, stricken silence.

"Arrested Charley Kincaid!"

"Charley Kincaid?"

Why, he was one of the best, one of themselves.

"That's the craziest thing I ever heard of!"

The young man nodded, shocked like the rest, but self-important with his information.

"He wasn't downstairs when Catherine Jones was dancing—he says he was in the men's locker-room." (Continued on page 134)

Gospel Shoes

By Gerald Beaumont

Illustrated by Dudley Gloyne Summers

"ASH," exclaimed Major Jefferson Wayne, "we've got it!"

"Yassuh, Major, whut we got now?"

"Supremus blood, you black hunk o' misery!"

"Well, fo' Gawd's sake!"

"Told you I'd get it!" said the Major, bracing himself against the pasture gate and brandishing his cane at his colored foreman.

"Told you I'd get it! General Teague has added Optimus to his stud, and he's the son o' Bonimo and Fair Garden, by Melior; third sire Plus Ultra; fourth sire Excelsior, and fifth sire—mark my words,—fifth sire *Supremus*—greatest foundational progenitor in the history of the American turf!"

Ash Johnson's eyes rolled piously heavenward. "Well, bow down, my people!"

"Stir yo' stumps now, Ash! We've been accorded the glorious privilege of sending three mares to Optimus. Can't miss a derby winner now. Our twenty years' drouth is over. We'll get a foal that will terminate the present deplorable condition of Greenbow Hill!"

"Yassuh, Major! Roll, Jordan, roll!"

"Never mind the psalms. Time's come for action. I'm aiming to send Winter Bells, Queen's Token and old Aggie W. How about it, Ash?"

Inasmuch as they were the only brood mares Major Jefferson Wayne at this time possessed, Ash agreed heartily.

"Sure sounds like noble selection, Major. Ought to git one foal whut would wear gospel shoes."

"Ash, we'll get three!"

"Us needs jes' one," observed Ash. "Only needs one hawss to cop 'at ol' derby. Yassuh, all Ah asks is one li'l boy hawss whut kin pick 'em up and lay 'em down, regular! In the blessed words o' Luke—"

"That'll do, Ash! You let the disciples alone, and pay powerful attention to yo' job. I'll notify General Teague that we'll send Winter Bells this very evening. And Ash—"

"Yassuh, Major!"

"Remind me next week to raise yo' salary."

Ash sighed. "Says which? Beg pahdon, Major suh, but y'all been raisin' mah wages every week since Ah knowed you, an' I aint neveh yit seen the color o' one buck dollar. As Daniel say when he seen 'em lions—"

"Shut yo' face," commanded the Major. "If you talk Bible to me once mo', there'll be one less darky in Fayette County. I've a notion to fire you right now!"

"Beg pahdon, Major. Ah done tol' you afore you kain't neveh fire me, 'cause you aint neveh yit hire me. I jes' drift me onto this heah fa'm, and when ma feets get rested, Ah drifts me somewhere else. Meanwise Ah is still the nursery nigger fo' yo' stable. Yassuh, 'at's me!"

This ended the colloquy between Major Jefferson Wayne of Fayette County, Kentucky—who was tall and gaunt and a trifle stoop-shouldered—and his volunteer assistant Ash Johnson, who weighed two hundred pounds, and suffered from a pious temperament and very flat feet.

Major Jeff would rather have parted with his right leg than to lose the services of the limping, coffee-colored psalm-singer who had attached himself ten years previously to Greenbow Hill Farm. Truth to tell, Ash felt much the same way about the picturesque Kentuckian who had spent the better part of a lifetime searching

NOW that he has recovered from his recent illness, Gerald Beaumont is back in his story stride again with a Derby winner if there ever was one. Not even his own famous "*The Christmas Handicap*" or "*Oh, Susanna*" can equal this heart-warming story of the sport of kings and Kentuckians. Henceforth his inimitable stories will be published continuously in this magazine.

for the lost blood of Supremus and sighing for the golden foal that had never materialized. Now, by the grace of God and the kindness of Daniel Teague, who had replenished the old Shelby stud with imported sires, the Major was to have his wish.

Dusk beheld Ash Johnson, ambassador extraordinary to the court of Optimus, shuffling along a country road, leading Winter Bells by a frayed halter-rope, and chanting plaintively his favorite hymn for the road:

Whut kind o' shoes am those you wear?

Oh, ma Lawd!

'At you kin ride upon the air?

Oh, ma Lawd!

'Em shoes Ah wear am gospel shoes

An' you kin wear 'em if you choose—

Oh, ma Lawd!

The route led northward along the pike twelve miles out of Lexington in a region that is the Arcadia of horseflesh—nay more, the fountain-head that for over a century has never ceased to pour fresh blood of purple lineage into the thirsting veins of the sport of kings.

Nature has blessed Fayette County's green hills and folding dales; millionaires have ornamented it with show places that represent the last word in extravagance; and equine aristocracy rules supreme. Road-signs point the way to the court of many a gallant sire of the turf: "*To Man o' War*," "*To Stefan the Great*," "*To Friar Rock*" and a score of others. Each has its legion of admirers, and on Sundays the highways are choked with visitors.

But the real romance of the industry—and there is a romance—is not to be found on the luxurious establishments of the wealthy. Rather one must look to the smaller farms where the breeding industry is not alone a poor man's passion but his sole source of livelihood. Here life runs its full gamut of jest and jubilation, poverty and pathos, hope and despair.

Just such a place was Greenbow Hill, and it might as well be admitted now that its sole owner and proprietor, Major Jeff, was a gentleman who possessed profound convictions that were always wrong.

If consistency be indeed a jewel, then Major Jeff must be designated as a gem of purest ray serene. For twenty years or more the Major had been breeding foals that were of no account, advocating theories that would not work, and proposing to a maiden lady who said: "No."



"Whoa, hawss. Mornin', Major, suh! We heah at las'. As the Good Book say—"

But being a thoroughbred of the old school, the Major was not discouraged. "Any gentleman is liable to be mistaken, suh!" he was accustomed to explain. "As a prophet, I seem to be a trifle off form. Never have been right about anything yet. But I live in hopes, suh! Damn my coat-tails, I live in hopes!"

All Fayette County pretty well understood the nature of the Major's hopes. According to his own admission, he had been courting Miss Polly Pennington, his neighbor, "ever since he was foaled."

As for his convictions regarding Supremus, he was in the habit of broadcasting them nightly in the lobby of the Phoenix Hotel at Lexington.

"Don't talk to me, suh, 'bout yo' Black Toney's, yo' Suh Henry's, and yo' Peters the Great! Mere parents, suh! Not progeni-

tors! I wouldn't trade a drop o' Supremus blood for a barrel o' Bourbon, and God knows, suh, that's a powerful inducement in these deplorable days!"

So vigorously did he champion the memory of Supremus that he and old Colonel Masters, who favored Sun Star, battered each other over the head with canes one night, and had to be dragged apart by hotel attendants. The Major was requested to air his opinions elsewhere.

"Pearls before swine," he rebuked, mopping his forehead. "I shall waste my breath no mo'. What this country needs in addition to the blood o' Supremus is a brand new line o' innkeepers. My compliments to you, suh, and you can go to hell!"

Thereafter the Major sulked in the seclusion of Greenbow Hill until Teague of New York brought Optimus from England; where-



Down they came, Don Domo on the rail, and
at his side the ugly duckling of Greenbow Hill.

upon Jefferson Wayne bloomed out like a century-plant, and the story of the golden foal begins.

"Ash, you better take Queen's Token next."

"Yassuh, Major, an' about ma wages—the Good Book says 'at the Lawd will pervide, but—"

"Here's fifty cents. Get out!"

"Well, praise the Heavenly Kingdom!"

Another fortnight passed, and for the third and last time Ash Johnson plodded along the path to royalty, this time with old Aggie W., who was almost as lame as her attendant. There was a time when Aggie, carrying twenty pounds of lead and a green apprentice, beat the great Cedric a head on the post in the Suburban. But there were hollows over her eyes now, and repeated motherhood had sapped her vitality.

The hush of enchantment enveloped the countryside as Aggie W. limped onward, and overhead a young fingernail moon was curved in a mystic smile. Ash raised his voice in song:

*Ma ship is on the ocean
And we'll anchor by and by.
She's makin' fo' the Kingdom
And we'll anchor by and by!*

Miss Polly Pennington, whose matrimonial disinclinations were attributed by her suitor to the "natural perversity o' the sex," smiled gently as he passed her cottage.

The passing years had done kindly by the daughter of the late Judge Pennington. She was a sweet-faced, soft-spoken woman, still youthful in appearance, softly rounded, and bearing little resemblance to the traditional type of spinster. Her small farm was even more neglected than the Major's, if such a thing was possible, but it was a paradise for pets of every description. Peacocks strolled over the dead lawns and even through the open doors of the house; game-chickens duelled everywhere and undisturbed; cats by the dozen sunned themselves on the barn roof; and wherever Miss Pennington chose to walk, there were always four or five fat puppies tumbling at her heels and tugging joyously at her skirts. It seemed as though every decrepit and homeless animal in Fayette County took quarters with Judge Pennington's daughter, and she welcomed them all.

Possibly this explains why Miss Polly did not feel free to become the mistress of Greenbow Hill, though old Colonel Masters had long ago ventured the explanation that was generally accepted.

"Too much early speed in that race. Jefferson likes to go right out in front and stay there, and Miss Polly doesn't want to be



headed. They'll run each other into the ground trying to take the pace away. Something will come along one of these days and beat both of them."

Apparently the Colonel had it sized up correctly. Obstinacy, mounted on the back of Time, galloped on; and though Major Jeff made several valiant attempts to catch the reins, all he clung to finally was his convictions. The last time these convictions had taken the form of decisive action was one morning following the funeral of old Mrs. Pennington, a ceremony that left Miss Polly entirely alone.

The Major dressed himself with exceptional care, climbed into a high-wheeled surrey and drove to his neighbor's cottage. Polly greeted him from the porch.

"My dear," he announced, "I have the honor to inform you we are to be married this afternoon by Judge Williams, who is waiting for us in the courthouse at Lexington. Permit me to assist you into my carriage."

Miss Pennington's soft drawl floated back to him. "Jefferson, my dear, you were never further wrong in yo' life!"

The Major mounted the steps. "Now, see heah, Polly, I've stood all the infernal nonsense I'm capable of accepting. You are going to marry me today, my dear."

"I admire yo' confidence, Jefferson, but I deplore yo' judgment."

"Polly, are you getting into my carriage?"

"No, my dear, not today."

The Major advanced grimly, long arms extended. Panic was in Miss Pennington's eyes. She fluttered helplessly in his path like a frightened bird.

"Jeff Wayne! Don't you dare! Don't you—"

The Major's determination wilted. His arms fell to his side.

To lay forceful hands upon a woman was quite impossible.

"Damn my coat-tails," he sighed. "I can't do it. Always have prided myse'f on bein' of a courageous nature, but when I face you, my dear, the hot blood o' the Waynes seems to ooze right out o' the soles o' my boots! My humble apologies, Miss Pennington, and I bid you good day!"

He descended the steps and headed for the gate. Halfway, he paused, looked back, and elevated a warning finger. "But I live in hopes, my dear. I'll be obliged, Polly, if you'll remember that I still live in hopes!"

Small wonder if the Major believed that, with the acquisition of Supremus blood, his luck had turned at last. Impatiently he watched the long autumn days drag on. Winter came, with its promise of spring.

Winter Bells was the first to foal. Her offspring came early in January, and it proved to be a colt, the most perfect specimen of equine babyhood Ash Johnson or the Major had ever seen. Even old Doc' Saunders, the veterinarian, admitted he had never seen a likelier foal. Polly Pennington said the same thing. Major Jeff's opinions could be heard clear down to Lexington.

"Damn my coat-tails. I'm right at last! There it is! We got it! Derby winner, Ash!"

"Yassuh, Major, sure looks like it!"

"Looks like it? Why, yo' psalm-singin' idiot, nothing could be mo' certain! By gad, Ash, that's a good name fo' that colt. We'll call it *Certain*."

"Seems like that's prognosticating, Major, and the Bible say that he who—"

"Shut yo' face!" commanded the Major.

"I'll register that colt today as *Certain* and qualify him for every stake in Kentucky. Now you keep an eye on Queen's Token."

"Yassuh, Major!"

The next foal was a filly. It came to Greenbow Hill on a crisp winter morning, born in a padded stall in the maternity barn, and it was as dainty a morsel of thoroughbred femininity as ever delighted the eye of a breeder. The Major's enthusiasm was tempered somewhat by his convictions regarding the first-born. Also he realized that few fillies are able to overcome the natural handicap of their sex.

"Smart-looking trick, Ash. She may do it! By gad, Ash, that's a good name! Reckon I'll call her *May Do*."

"Yassuh, Major, the Good Book say that the Lamb—"

"Ash, I'll fire you—"

"How come you fire me, when you aint neveh—"

"Shut up! How's old Aggie W. behavin'? Better move her pretty soon, eh?"

"Nawsuh, her time aint nowheres near. 'Em aged hawsses got ways o' their own. I don't figure her fo' month o' Sundays!"

But Aggie W. fooled them. The gallant old mare began to weave in her stall that very night, and she called repeatedly for Ash Johnson, knowing that she should be in the maternity quarters, with the straw piled high and the walls padded as a protection to the tiny foal that would soon be stumbling around. But Ash was sleeping soundly, and no one came to the aid of old Aggie W.

Along toward morning the hour of distress came and passed. A tiny bay-colored foal shivered on the board floor; and the mare, blowing warm air from her nostrils, licked her offspring into life, and nudged it impatiently. The foal interpreted the summons and tried obediently to achieve its feet—tried with the desperate courage of a thoroughbred, but to no avail. Something was wrong. The baby legs had no strength. Aggie's foal couldn't reach the maternal fount. The mare lifted her head and blew shrill, repeated blasts from distended nostrils. Her heels crashed against the stall door. In unmistakable terms Aggie W. notified the world that she wanted help.

The Major and Ash arrived on the scene at almost the same moment.

"Hell's fire!" exclaimed the Major. (Continued on page 112)

Two Flights up

Illustrated by

John Alonzo Williams

By Mary Roberts
Rinehart

The Story So Far:

THE shadow of catastrophe indubitably hung over that strange Washington household. What was behind it? To Howard Warrington, a bond-salesman newly domiciled therein as a paying guest, understanding came step by amazing step. First he learned that there was no Hilda—that the maidservant to whom Mrs. Bayne so often and elegantly referred was a myth, and that the housework was done by her sister Margaret and her daughter Holly. Well, that was a fiction common enough, of course. But when late one night Warrington smelled gas, traced it to the source, came to the locked door of the kitchen, broke in and found Aunt Margaret neatly lain down to die on the floor with all the burners of the stove turned on—that was nothing to smile over.

Aunt Margaret recovered—and rather surprisingly she soon thereafter married an old and persistent suitor, one James Cox, the trusted employee of a downtown department store. Yet Warrington's rescue of Aunt Margaret did little to break down the reserve the Baynes maintained toward him; and he could only rage inwardly when wealthy, prim and fashionable Furness Brooks came to call. More and more often Warrington, passing the drawing-room door on his way upstairs, saw Brooks there with Holly, and heard Mrs. Bayne at her so-genteel tea-table, making her eternal allusions to the apocryphal Hilda.

He raged inwardly, yes, until the engagement was announced. And then he burst out in protest to Holly.

"Marry your popinjay!" he stormed at her. "Go on mincing through life. Drink your tea and hold your little finger out! I'm through."

Suddenly he saw the engagement ring on her left hand, and he lifted it and looked at it. From the ring he looked at her hand; it was small and shapely, but it bore the scars of "Hilda's" work. "You poor little fool," he said gently, and kissed it.

It was soon thereafter that Mrs. Bayne came to Warrington with a bond and asked him to turn it into cash for her—she knew little of such things. He realized of course that the money would go to buy the clothes and the little intimate things with which Holly would go to her husband; yet he could only acquiesce. What he did not know at this time, though nearly everyone else in town knew it, was that Tom Bayne, Holly's father, was in the penitentiary, whither he had been sent after stealing a large amount in securities from the bank of which he had been cashier. Mrs. Bayne and Holly knew, moreover, that he was soon to be released.

Warrington learned about these things presently, however. The day after he sold the bond for Mrs. Bayne, she went on an extravagant shopping expedition; and Warrington explained to Holly, when she questioned him, the source of her mother's sudden wealth. Late that night he was startled by a noise and a light in the attic; and making his way thither, he found Holly kneeling over a suitcase full of bonds which had been under some loose floor boards, concealed by a trunk. Holly told him her father's story then, and he offered to help her restore the bonds to the bank. It was only later that he realized that he too had been made a criminal when he sold that presumably stolen bond.

Holly and Warrington decided the suitcase must be gotten out of the house at once before the bond was traced and search made, and he took it to the Cox flat and asked Margaret to care

The zeal with which the film folk follow the fiction published in this magazine is perfectly illustrated by the case of "Two Flights up." The issue containing the first installment had not been out twelve hours before Mrs. Rinehart was swamped with offers from the best moving-picture producers. All she had to do, indeed, was choose. This she was able to do without delay, and the tale will be reborn in the films very soon after its publication here is concluded.

for it. But Warrington was followed by the detectives already on his trail, with the result that the Cox apartment was raided, the suitcase found and James Cox—Honest James, as he was so proud of being called—was arrested.

In high wrath Margaret went to the Bayne house, and was met by Holly. The full import of the thing dawned on Margaret at length.

"She sold a bond," she repeated slowly. "Then—to clear James we would have to implicate her. Oh, my God, Holly! What are we going to do?" *(The story continues in detail:)*

AT six o'clock Holly came home. She dragged herself up the steps and stood there to compose herself, but Mrs. Bayne's sharp ears had heard her, and she flung the door wide.

"Well, I must say!" she said with asperity. "Didn't you know Furness was coming?"

"I couldn't make it any sooner."

"But where on earth have you been?"

"With Aunt Margaret."

She took off her hat, and in the glare of the hall chandelier she looked fairly extinguished, her eyes dull and her face colorless. The smile she managed to summon made her look appealingly childish; and Furness, coming into the hall, took advantage of her lack of resistance to put an arm around her.

"You come in here and sit down," he said authoritatively. "That's the girl. Now put your head back, and I'll get some tea."

Mrs. Bayne left them there and went up the stairs, tight-lipped and still considerably shaken. Strange thoughts had been running through her mind during that vigil at the front door, strange and terrifying thoughts. But that was all over now. Holly had been upset by the telegram and had gone to Margaret. She had always gone to Margaret when in trouble.

All over—unless Holly had got some nonsense into her head about marrying Furness. He had seemed all right. But he had not kissed her when she came in. Did that mean—

She walked the floor; her life seemed to be one anxiety after another.

In the drawing-room Furness made no advances to Holly. He



She picked up the telegram and read it. "You see, Mother," she said, "he is really ill if he can't travel."

saw that she was in no mood for them. And she understood and liked him for it; as he moved about, expertly preparing the tea, she was perhaps fonder of him than she had ever been before. He didn't talk. If what she took for kindness was really tact, it made no difference; for after all, behind most tactfulness is consideration.

When he gave her the cup his fingers touched hers, and he reached down and took her other hand, judicially.

"You're cold," he said, and going out into the hall returned with his overcoat and tucked it about her. "Don't talk yet," he told her.

He rather fancied himself in this new and masterful rôle; it gave him a sense of power, of masculine dominance, and out of this gratification came a new magnanimity. He saw himself, chivalrous and strong, bringing peace and succor to this unhappy

family, and the fact that he was to be well paid for it did not decrease his complacency.

It was not until her color had come back that he made any approach to her whatever, and then it was an indirect one.

"Now, see here," he said, in what he would have been startled to know was James Cox's best authoritative manner, "you have got some bee in the little bonnet, and it's nonsense. Do you hear that?"

She nodded dumbly.

"I know what it is, and it isn't going to make any difference. We may have to change some things, but not—not the essential. As far as that goes,"—like many fine gestures, this one was getting to be a bit more comprehensive than he had intended it to be,—"I'm willing to let things stand as they are, church and all, if you want to."

But she shook her head. "It wouldn't do," she said.

She looked at him. He was kind and thoughtful; somehow she had never thought of him as either of them, particularly. She was extremely touched, and inside her breast her heart felt like a lump of ice. She didn't love him. She never would love him.

In the silence that fell between them, filled with relief on Furness' part and a hundred flashing uncompleted thoughts on hers, she could hear faint, regular movements overhead, and knew that her mother was pacing the floor of her room, anxious, terrified, waiting for the outcome of the interview.

She stirred a little and put down her cup, and as if he had been awaiting this signal, Furness came over and sat down beside her.

"You poor darling!" he said. "And did you think I might let you go?" He put his arm around her and drew her closer. "I'll never let you go," he told her. "Never!"

There was more passion in the kiss he gave her than he had ever permitted himself before. And she closed her eyes and submitted to it, meekly, helplessly. What else was there to do? How could he know that when she closed her eyes it was to see James Cox huddled in a chair in the District Attorney's office, gazing out with dull, bewildered eyes at a world which had suddenly turned unfriendly? And to see Aunt Margaret, too, her hand on James' shoulder, ugly and militant, challenging that world.

Holly could still hear his voice: "Shut up, Margaret, for God's sake! This has nothing to do with you."

"It has everything to do with me—everything!"

Holly let Furness out, and then waited for a moment at the foot of the stairs, preparing herself for the interview that was waiting above. Glancing up, she saw a light, and knew Mrs. Bayne was at her door, or in the upper hall, listening, waiting.

She picked up her gloves and slowly made her way up; and her mother, hearing her, quietly closed her door and sat down



"And I suppose you'd say you did it, eh?" he said shrewdly. "And I wouldn't believe it."

on a chair. When Holly went in she was holding a book as though she had been reading.

"Well," she said, "I dare say it's all right?"

Holly stood just inside the door. She had carried up her hat, and now she stood with it in her hands, straightening the ribbons and staring at it. "Yes," she answered after a moment. "So far as he is concerned, it's all right."

"As he is concerned?" said her mother sharply. "I don't understand you."



Holly looked up. There was appeal in her face, and a sort of desperation.

"I don't think I can go through with it, Mother. I don't really care for him. I've tried, and I just—can't."

"And you told him that?" said Mrs. Bayne slowly. "You've let things go on to this time, a month before the wedding, and now you're talking of breaking it off?"

"I haven't told him. I wanted first to know what you thought."

"What I think!" said Mrs. Bayne, raising her voice. "What everyone will think! I've sacrificed for it; you'll never know what I've sacrificed. And now you're talking of throwing all that away; you'll let them say Furness jilted you because your father is coming home and the whole wretched story's been brought up once more. And you'll wreck me for a whim. I've just begun to live again. God knows I haven't lived for ten years. And all because you're tired today, and you think you 'don't care' for him."

"I don't, Mother. I hate him to touch me."
Suddenly Mrs. Bayne was more calm. She appraised Holly with her faded, worldly eyes. "Oh," she said. "So that's it. Don't you know every girl has a fit of panic before her wedding day? If that's all that's wrong with you—"

But the day's anxieties and this new shock had told on her. She leaned back in her chair and closed her eyes.

"Get me my smelling-salts," she said. "I feel as though I can't breathe."

Holly brought the salts, and for a long time Mrs. Bayne slowly inhaled them, holding the bottle delicately to her nose. Holly stood by her, helpless. She knew these attacks; Margaret had always maintained that they were temper, but she knew better now. The doctor had told her so some time ago. So she watched her with the salts, and any hope she had had of telling about James Cox and his terrible situation died within her.

She turned down the bed, filled a hot-water bottle, and later on she helped her mother to undress. There was a certain relief in these familiar homely duties; they kept her from thinking, and she knew that sooner or later she must get away somewhere and think.

It was while she was straightening her mother's dressing-table, with its ladylike litter of old ivory-backed brushes and toilet waters, that she saw another telegram lying there. She picked it up and read it—read it twice, with Mrs. Bayne's eyes on her.

"You see, Mother," she said slowly, "he is really ill if he can't travel."

Mrs. Bayne was propped up in bed with a silk jacket over her shoulders. She felt easier sitting up. Beside her the reading-lamp sent a soft rosy glow over her, making her look younger, almost childish.

"Oh, yes," she said. "I forgot to give you that. It gives us a chance to breathe, anyhow."

Holly turned out the other lights and raised a window. She stood there for a minute or two, inhaling the cold night air. Her mother's heartlessness where her father was concerned was nothing new to her. It was compounded of old neglects and old frictions, as well as the final culminating matter of his disgrace.

She wondered vaguely if there had ever been any love between them, in the way she herself thought of love. She tried to look back to the days when the two of them had occupied that very chamber, but the low spots of that early life had left no impression on her; only the high lights, of dinners and evening clothes, constant movement, comings and goings, cars and callers, had remained with her.

And all the time she knew her mind was evading what it must face. She had gone to the District Attorney's office with Margaret, determined to make a clean breast of the matter and throw herself on his mercy. After all, he was a human being; he would understand. And the bank was getting back what it had never expected. It could afford to be lenient.

True, one bond was missing, but she would pay that back. She could go to work and save; she would work her fingers to the bone. And she would say *she* had given the bond to Mr. Warrington to sell. That ought to fix that.

But the District Attorney had been in court, and his assistant had been arranging about James Cox's bond. People kept coming in and going out, and a little man with shrewd eyes and a kindly mouth, who turned out to be one of Mr. Cox's employers, Mr. Steinfeldt, was haranguing James as he huddled in his chair.



"We don't do this for everybody, Mr. Cox, y'understand," he said. "But when people stick by Steinfeldt and Roder, we stick by them. Only the other day I said to Mr. Roder: 'Do the square thing by our people, and they've got no comeback.' See?"

"I'm much obliged to you," said James Cox dully.

"Now, as I figure it," Mr. Steinfeldt went on, expanding, "you've been a fool. You don't mind my saying that, Mrs. Cox? This aristocratic sister-in-law of yours has put one over, see? She knew Bayne was getting out, and would be wanting to get away somewhere, so she sends the loot where he can pick it up easy. And she sells one bond, see, so he can get off."

"I guess that's about it," said James Cox humbly.

And Holly had ignored Margaret's warning glance and thrown her hat into the ring.

"How do you know my mother sold the bond?" she demanded.



"Get out of that door or I'll kill you," said James. "I mean it. Off with you!"

"Did you tell your Aunt Margaret about using the lace on the train of your dress?" she asked. "I think, if it comes from the shoulders—"

Holly looked at her, so comfortable once more, so secure; her color was better and her lips were no longer blue.

"I told her," she said quietly, and went out of the room.

Chapter Eighteen

THERE was no doubt that the house was being watched, nor any doubt in Warrington's mind as to why.

"They'd have picked me up before this if it hadn't been for that dog," he considered, grimly.

He retreated from the window and stood in the center of the darkened room, and swaying branches by the street-lamps threw ghostly shadows on the walls. He might have been a ghost himself, so still he stood.

All sorts of thoughts were hurtling through his brain. Suppose the fellow had followed him that morning and saw him leave the suitcase at the Cox apartment? That would involve them undoubtedly; and the fact of Holly's mysterious absence that afternoon began to obtrude itself. Suppose it had already involved them!

He went back to the window again, and saw that the Brooks car was still there. A moment later, however, he heard the door close and watched it moving off, and he started down the stairs. He must see Holly and learn what had happened. But he did not go down.

Mrs. Bayne was on the landing below, peering down so absorbedly that she had not heard him.

"Scared!" he said to himself. "Knows something's wrong, and doesn't know what it is."

(Continued on page 162)

"You've been very kind, Mr. Steinfeldt, but you have no right to accuse her without knowing anything about it."

But Mr. Steinfeldt had only smiled at her and had taken no offense.

"And I suppose you'd say *you* did it, eh?" he said shrewdly. "You'd say to me, 'Mr. Steinfeldt, I took that bond and sold it,' eh? Don't say that, miss, because I wouldn't believe it anyhow."

And that had been all. Mr. Cox and Aunt Margaret had gone down in the elevator with her, a strange, humbled Mr. Cox, stepping apologetically out of people's way, as if he had done something he shouldn't: a silent, defeated Mr. Cox, his flag down and his banner trailing in the dust. . . .

When Holly turned from the window, her mother put down her smelling-salts.

MR. BENÉT solemnly avers that this is a true story—true, that is, in its basic facts. In any event it will undoubtedly be appreciated to the full by anyone over six feet four in height. As a sort of complement to the story, there will be published in an early issue a tale by James Hopper that shows the reverse of the medal.

Take a Fellow your Size

By
Stephen Vincent Benét

Illustrated by T. D. Skidmore



WHEN Martin Crandall was four, his parents commented fondly on what a nice, tall boy he was for his age. When he was eight, they admitted, a trifle dubiously, that it certainly was wonderful the way Junior grew. When he was twelve, they stopped talking about it in public altogether—but in private they often wondered rather dazedly just where he was going to stop.

It is no joke to be an out-size in humanity—Martin discovered that very early. When he was eight, for instance, he was as tall as most youngsters of eleven or twelve—but the boys of eleven and twelve refused to admit him to their clan; and when he played with boys his own age, accidents ensued. And things got worse as he grew older, for if it is difficult for a twelve-year-old to fraternize with children of eight without hard feeling, it is practically impossible for a boy who looks as if he ought to be entering college to join in the sports of thirteen. In school, for instance, while not particularly brilliant, he always stood well in his grade—but what is the use of standing well in the grade you really belong in when you look like a backward giant baby? He went into long trousers a year before any of his contemporaries, but even so, his last months in the largest size boys' knickerbockers procurable were a positive torture to him. He never fitted his desk; he never fitted his chair; as regards the matter of half-price tickets on railway-trains, his life was a constant warfare with incredulous conductors. If his crushed spirit ever revived long enough to lead him into mischief, he was always caught, for he was so much too large to miss. His own sex regarded him as a permanent source of malicious amusement, and the opposite sex fled before him as before a portent. But the thing he hated worst about it all was the cry: "Take a fellow your size!"

He heard it first in kindergarten, when he was four and looked seven. Micky Dorgan, an undersized red-haired imp of six, had filled his cap with mud during recess, and Martin was happily engaged in rubbing Micky's nose in the dust, when the teacher pulled them apart. She wasn't angry with Micky at all, though Micky was the primary offender. Instead, "Martin! Martin Crandall!" she said severely. "I'm ashamed of you, Martin—a great, big boy like you bullying a little fellow. If you must be wicked and fight—you ought at least to be *brave* enough to take a fellow your size!"

"But, Miss Ly-on—" said Martin, tearful with the injustice of it.

"No, Martin, not another word! I shall have something to say to you later, young man! There, Micky dear, come here—" And Micky was consoled with chocolate and kind words while all the other little boys danced around Martin, chanting, "Yah! Cowardy custard! Take a feller your size!" and the little girls scraped their fingers at him in shocked distaste.

After which, of course, as long as he stayed in kindergarten, Martin was delivered over—bound hand and foot—to the petty tyrannies of Micky. And there was no way of retaliation, for at the slightest gesture of offense on Martin's part, Micky saw to it that the scornful sing-song rose again: "Take a feller your size, cowardly custard—take a feller your size." So Martin learned very early and most unwillingly to repress all natural zest for combat and be a very Early Christian indeed in patience and in turning the other cheek. Which may have been good for his will-power, but was undoubtedly bad for his morale.

Two later fights, in school, only fixed indelibly in Martin's mind his hopeless ostracism from the normal things of childhood. He still remembered the horrific incident of the irate



"Don't dare speak to me, Martin Crandall!" said the young lady, her eyes blazing.

proportions; but even there his dimensions were a handicap rather than a help. Any brisk little fellow could leave him standing still when it came to running—and in football and baseball it took so long for him to get the whole vast plan of himself coordinated that

the play was always over before he had started. Besides, that invaluable thing, the competitive spirit, had been too well beaten out of him. The only moment when he ever touched the fringe of athletic glory was when once, in his last year at school, having been put in at full-back on the scrubs because it was the new coach's first week of practice, a fumble brought him the ball and a miracle a clear field to the first team's goal-line. He ran five yards and then tripped over his own feet, while the first team piled on top of him. After that, his football activities were confined to cheering.

The following spring he dreamed of becoming a high-jumper—but that was no use, either. It was all right as long as he could step over the bar, but after he had broken three bars in splinters while trying to jump them, he retired from competition with nothing gained but the additional nickname of "Willy, the Leaping Giraffe."

When he went to college, he was eighteen, and six feet three, and the casual eye traveled up his pencil-like form with growing incredulity till at last it reached the mild and incongruous visage with its air of meek and wistful sorrow. That air might have been appealing if Martin had been five feet five—as it was, it was only something that made perfect strangers stare at him in the street and nudge each other—and he knew it and hated it and could not change it.

His voice had changed from a squeak to a threatening rumble—but the threat would not have deceived a baby in long-clothes, and bristling little men were always shoving in ahead of him whenever he was in a hurry, and then glaring at him as if he had insulted them. The waiter in the dining-car jumped and turned light gray when Martin asked him the time in an embarrassed growl, but one look at Martin's face reassured him, and Martin got his roast-beef lukewarm and his coffee cold, while a small but virulent old gentleman at the next table was served like the president of the road. But Martin hardly noticed the difference—he was used to things like that.

Curled up in his berth that night like a homeless anaconda, he prayed in all humility and sincerity. He was going to a college where nobody knew him—a college that drew its students from every section of the country. "O Lord," he besought, "O good Lord—I'm not asking an awful lot—but, O Lord, let there be just one fellow my size there!" In the excess of his emotion he nearly succeeded in folding the traveling salesman in Upper Nine up in his berth like a handkerchief, and an irritated voice remarked that there were some people on this train who ought to be in a zoo. . . .

He was looking uncertainly round the station platform wondering just how to get up to the dean's office, when a kindly senior with a badge that said "Freshman Reception Committee" hustled up to him.

"Hello," he said. "Freshman—huh?"

"Yes sir," said Martin in a timid roar.

German delicatessen-store-keeper who had called at the Crandall home accompanied by a bored policeman and insisted that *mein leedle Gussie* had been brutally assaulted in the open street by a young giant. Martin's truthful explanation that *mein leedle Gussie* was not only three years older than himself but had commenced hostilities by striking him across the face with a smoked eel had proved singularly unconvincing, and only Mr. Crandall's tact had avoided a scene in the Children's Court.

After that, Martin accepted his fate with desolate resignation. He became a hunted thing, despised by the older boys and the prey of the smaller ones. If he fought, the world considered him a sinister bully; if he didn't fight, men knew him for an arrant craven. Firmly implanted upon both horns of this dilemma, he himself sometimes wondered confusedly just what he was. Only occasionally, at night, he dreamed—of a blessed and Brobdignagian land where high-school seniors were thirteen feet tall and he drove whole armies of clumsy giants before him. But the dreams never lasted long enough—that was the trouble.

If he had been any sort of an athlete, he might have won back the respect of his cosmos quite easily, in spite of his lizardy

The senior started slightly but gazed at him with approval.

"Football man?"

"No," said Martin firmly. He wasn't going to try *that* again.

"Oh," said the senior, losing interest a little. "Baseball, I suppose—or track; ought to be good in track with those—ahem—" And he coughed.

"No," said Martin dolefully; then seeing the puzzled surprise on the senior's face, he added desperately: "I—I thought I might try out for the crew, though; if—"

"We'll," said the senior, obviously envisaging Martin in a shell, "well—that's fine, of course—fine spirit but—" A smile twitched the corners of his mouth and was suppressed. Then an idea seemed to strike him. "Ever wrestle?"

"Why, no—but I—I—" stuttered Martin.

The senior clapped him on the back. "Fine. Fine! Put you down for the wrestling—sophomore-freshman wrestling tomorrow night—old custom—lightweight—heavyweight—h'm—have to put you in a special class, I guess, but that's all right—I'll fix it up—you and Slaughter Sullivan—make a peach of a match—"

"Slaughter Sullivan?" said Martin a trifle faintly.

"Sure—oh, you must have heard of him—fella that broke the Yale man's ribs last year—quite a wrestler, Slaughter—rough, of course—but you ought to be able to handle him—"

"But listen—" said Martin, who had never wrestled in his life.

"Oh, that's all right," said the senior airily. "No trouble at all. Crandall—that the name? Report at the gym tomorrow night—eight o'clock—you and Slaughter—hit of the evening—remember—" And he was gone, leaving Martin to run the gantlet of a group of sophomores who had overheard the conversation and made audible inquiries as to the state of his ribs.

NEVERTHELESS, for a day Martin tasted the sweets of fame—for the news spread rapidly among the freshman class that a champion had been found among their number to wrestle the already famous Slaughter Sullivan. Debonair youths from famous preparatory schools walked into Martin's room unannounced to punch his muscles and marvel at his stature. An all-inter-scholastic quarterback took charge of his diet. The sophomore class to a man singled him out as one of the favored few for whom their most annoying attentions were reserved. He became a campus character in the time it took him to walk from the station to the college, and when he went to bed the night of his arrival, he felt like a normal human being for the first time.

Over the wrestling-match itself, however, a veil had best be drawn—for the celebrated Mr. Sullivan, after a brief period during which he was heard to mutter that this was like trying to half-nelson the Woolworth Building, solved the puzzle of Martin's anatomy with ease and dispatch. But Martin's class cheered him all the same, and he saw the rest of the bouts with the all-inter-scholastic quarterback's sweater thrown over his shoulders and cigarettes thrust upon him by new-made friends from St. Judas' and Scotchkiss and Dale. They called him "Daddy-long-legs," but it was obviously in genuine comradeship, and when he found himself talking to them as if size didn't matter, a dreamlike happiness fell upon him that seemed too good to be true.

If it hadn't been for the accident of the wrestling-match, Martin's college-years might have been as subdued a gray as his schooldays. As it was, he became a privileged character immediately. Once his defensive mail of taciturn shyness was pierced, he found himself, to his intense surprise, with the reputation of not only being highly amusing but extremely likable as well. The even-tempered good-humor he had forced himself to adopt through so many arduous years now brought him unheard-of returns—and his figure did the rest. Other men had to compete for prominence—he merely had to exist. When he was kidnapped by the sophomores on his way to the freshman dinner, the entire freshman class turned out to rescue him. He became a sort of un-gainly and sacred totem to his classmates—they invented fantastic legends anent the tailoring of his garments, the shifts to which he was put in theaters and street-cars; and as one of the sights of the college, he vied in popularity with the Revolutionary cannon and the new memorial quadrangle. He was one of the first five men to receive bids for the junior clubs, and elective offices pursued him. And yet, in spite of all his popularity, he grew neither spoiled nor arrogant. There was always the fly in the amber, the canker in the rose-leaf. In other words, there was always his size.

He never told anybody about it, but he knew. He was leading a happier life than he would have thought possible—but how? In his own opinion, because he was a freak. A popular freak, to be sure, but still a freak. Other men won their honors with

sweat and effort—did something for the college to deserve them, while he—the class laughed and carelessly gave him what harder-working fellows strove for in vain. If he could only once be pitted in open conflict with somebody of his own dimensions! Then, no matter how badly he might be beaten, he would feel somehow justified to himself. But he had never met such an antagonist and doubted if he ever would.

Hungry he watched each entering freshman class—in vain. There were tall boys among them, but he topped the tallest by inches—and he was still growing. His junior year he measured six feet four and a half in his stocking feet, and gave himself up, with a sigh, as hopeless. And in the first months of his senior year, his roommates began to wonder what on earth had hit old Daddy-long-legs to make him so gloomy every now and then—for the last freshman class that Martin would know had entered, and still the destined challenger had not come forth.

IN addition to this, Martin had added to his difficulties by falling in love. Not that Lila Landon was a difficulty—far from it. She had a face like a little locket cut in the shape of a heart, and her feet deserved crystal slippers. She was nearly as tall as the second button of Martin's coat and she had the airiness—and, I regret to say, the flashing temper—of a humming-bird. She led Martin a dance, but she never let anybody make fun of him except herself, and once got up on a chair to smack the face of a leggy cousin who had disrespectfully alluded to him as "that giant asparagus that's always hangin' around here."

But in January she started wearing an old-fashioned ring of his—on the wrong finger of her hand because she said she felt more engaged that way; and while nothing was really announced as yet, Martin began to feel as if he were walking along a succession of comets. Only occasionally did the old yearning for violent conflict with a suitable foe return to plague him—and if March had not brought one of those record snowfalls that make old inhabitants bores, the course of their love would doubtless have progressed without a ripple—and Martin would never have been called anything but Daddy-long-legs.

As it was, on the bright afternoon that followed the blizzard, Martin was plowing his way toward Lila's house when his ear was suddenly and violently filled with snow. He wouldn't have minded so much, but it was his last clean collar—and Lila liked him neat. He turned, raging, to receive another snowball full in the mouth, and see his assailant flee down the street. He pursued frantically—the figure ahead slipped and fell—Martin caught up with it—yanked it to its feet—a wild swipe from the other made Martin throw up his arm instinctively—his long and bony elbow caught the other under the chin. Whereupon the other sank to the ground with a blank expression in his eyes and Martin perceived to his horror that his assailant was a sixteen-year-old boy.

HE bent over and was wildly fumbling at the boy's collar when a violent blow in the back made him nearly sit down in the snow. He turned to face a wild-eyed woman who was sobbing: "You great, big brute! Oh, oh, you great, big brute! Has he killed you, Lester? Has he killed you? You big brute—I saw you hit him with a stone!"

"Madam," said Martin, "listen—" But by now they had been joined by two of those spectators who rise out of the ground like mushrooms whenever an accident occurs.

"What's the matter?" said a round old gentleman interestedly.

"Matter!" said the woman frantically. "Matter indeed! My little boy was just playing in the snow when this big brute deliberately knocked him down and jumped on him! Right on his chest he was jumping with his great big feet when I— Oh, Lester! Speak to me, Lester!"

"Shameful!" said the round old gentleman severely. "Disgraceful! Young man—you ought to be arrested!"

"But listen—" said Martin. "He hit me with a snowball—"

"And is that any reason," said a sharp-nosed woman who had just arrived, "for a big, healthy giant like you to cripple a poor little boy with a club? Why don't you take a fellow your size?"

"Oh, Lord!" said Martin.

"Hear him? He's cursing me! I want you all to witness that he's cursing me!" said the mother of Lester with bitter satisfaction; and, "Young man, you deserve a first-class thrashing," said the round old gentleman.

"Oh—oh—you be damned—all of you!" said Martin incoherently, and turned away—to come face to face with Lila, wrathful and out of breath.

"Lila!"



The next few moments were a whirling pinwheel of arms and bodies thrashing together. But Martin was happy.

"Don't dare to speak to me, Martin Crandall," said that young lady, her eyes blazing. "Where's that poor little child?" And she burrowed through the crowd—for by now it was a crowd—to bestow additional consolations upon the unwilling Lester.

When it was all over, and Lester had been assisted to his home, protesting the while that the big stiff hadn't even touched him, much less hurt him—a protest to which, oddly enough, no one but Martin paid the slightest attention—the engaged couple faced each other.

"Here!" said Lila, sobbing. "Oh, no, Martin Crandall—don't talk to me—oh, how could you, Martin, how could you?"

"But, Lila—"

"Don't talk to me, I say! I c-c-c-could marry you if you were

a m-murderer, Martin—if you m-murdered somebody big—but I—I c-couldn't marry a b-bully who b-beats little boys!" And sobbing violently, she thrust the ring she had been so proud of into his hand, and ran blindly up the street to her house.

"And she ought to have slapped your face for you, too!" came the unpleasant voice of Lester's mother from her porch.

If Martin had been brought up normally, he would doubtless have followed Lila as fast as his legs could carry him, and succeeded in making her feel heartily ashamed of herself in short order. As it was, he stood numbly in his tracks, gazing after her with the eyes of a stricken stag. At the bottom of his mind there had always been that fear that these last years were too good to endure; and now the fear (*Continued on page 178*)

THE author of this story has perhaps the widest first-hand knowledge of out-of-the-way nooks and corners of Europe possessed by any living fiction-writer. One feels his authority as one follows his description of the revenge that his strange American hero works on an obscure Carinthian town in this highly dramatic story.



Illustrated by
Ernest Fuhr

Dough

By James Francis Dwyer

THE mother of Louis Kellermann, overlord of the American theatrical world, was, during Kellermann's babyhood, the proprietor of a dancing bear—a collar-chafed rascal, sulky and truculent. The accompaniment to the clumsy dance performed by bruin was played by the mother on an instrument that was a cross between a zither and a glockenspiel. The woman sang too, and her singing drew the attention of her audiences to a green mole on her left cheek—a large mole, beryl-tinted.

The bear, the mongrel musical instrument and the green mole were the very earliest impressions that Louis Kellermann retained. Often he would sit for long periods in his splendid suite of offices overlooking Broadway trying vainly to recall what had happened before that dreadful day on which the possessions of his mother were thrust so fiercely before his mental eyes. The horror of that day had stirred the stylus of memory, so it seemed, to make its first mark.

Louis thought that he must have been about three years of age at the time; he was not sure. He had tried in vain to find the registration of his birth. When "Who's Who" had solicited his biography, he had guessed at his age. He was also doubtful of his place of birth, so it was recorded as: "Near Klagenfurt, Province of Carinthia, Austria."

Louis Kellermann, probably the greatest theatrical magnate of all time, was a strange bundle of overdrawn nerves and taut fibers. He possessed, as the physically weak and highly sensitive always possess, the million tiny cells in which are stored the little hates and little loves that the strong, lacking storage-room, burn up with each passing hour. His small body was a dump of recorded emotions. He was a ragbag of records. He carried the disks of countless impressions, and these disks were started by a word, a note of music, a whiff of perfume.

The midday heat of late summer—Louis Kellermann never

took a holiday—made him visualize in a rather terrifying manner that earliest of all his impressions—the one connected with the dancing bear, the green mole and the cross-bred musical instrument. This terrible memory-mummy of childhood had been embalmed in late summer. In the sarcophagus of dreadful recollections Louis had wrapped it in a vision of yellowing leaves, hot dust, brassy skies, a faint odor of perspiration, and heat weariness. When this combination reached New York on certain days in July and August, the locked tomb opened, and the dreadful memory came forth.

Louis Kellermann would then pause in the work of signing checks, leases and theatrical contracts, and stare out into the stream of Broadway. After a certain period the great thoroughfare would be curiously eliminated, and a self-hypnotic state would be induced. Louis Kellermann would see the dusty square of a little village in Carinthia, high up above Klagenfurt. Again, as in a dream, he viewed the yellowing chestnut trees, and from beneath those trees he saw, marching bravely into the square, the mother with the green mole, the dancing bear, and himself—a pathetic Louis, a toddler, tired and dusty.

It was a most minute and detailed film. No eye but that of a supersensitive genius of the dramatic could have recorded it.

Broadway might roar beneath the windows of Louis Kellermann's office, but Louis was far away. He was watching his mother bang the hybrid musical instrument—watching the rascally bear perform his clumsy rigadon—watching the little child that was himself. He would see distinctly the gathering audience, round-eyed peasants, tufts of feathers and Alpine edelweiss thrust in the bands of their curious hats. They advanced slowly, suspicion showing in their stiffened legs, suggesting fowls investigating a scorpion. The zither-glockenspiel would clack and clang; the bear, grumbling and growling, hopped around.



The lean man
reached for a gun
—leveled it at the
pursuers.

The film unrolled: more peasants—barelegged girls, rheumy-eyed men, old women with faces that resembled the plan of a switching yard.

It was one of these wrinkled hags that brought commotion into the square. The bear struck at her playfully. The old woman shrieked, picked up a stone and hurled it viciously at the animal. The son and grandson of the crone took part in the barrage.

The mother of Louis Kellermann made a protest. The bear showed temper at the fusillade. The old woman screamed and called the attention of the crowd to the green mole on the left cheek of the bear's proprietor.

A peasant woman made a gesture signifying her earnest desire for divine protection against the tricks of the Evil One. More stones struck the growling bear. Men shouted; women shrieked. There was the horrible, heaving motion of a blind and angry mob. They surged forward upon Louis, upon his mother and the enraged bear.

A flight, filmed forty years back, would be then unrolled for Louis Kellermann—a terrible flight that brought to him exquisite mental agony that was followed by an overpowering nausea.

The mother with the green mole had gripped Louis with her

right hand and the chain of the protesting bear with her left. They had fled down a narrow road fringed with shouldering poplars. The crowd pursued for a short distance; then, to the delight of the fugitives, they turned at the command of a big, black-bearded ogre and surged back across the square.

The mother of Louis Kellermann thought that she and her child and the growling bear were safe, but she was quickly disillusioned. The road she followed zigzagged down the side of the mountain, and the pursuers had cunningly taken a cut-off that met the main road at an elbow some five hundred yards below the village.

There the crowd waited, led by the

black-bearded ogre who was the most terrifying actor in the affair. This ogre was as tall as a poplar tree in the film taken by the virginal mind of the toddler. He brandished a club of immense size, and he rushed at the unfortunate bear as Louis and his mother attempted to pass.

Bruin lifted himself up and growled. The giant smote the beast a terrific blow on the top of the head. The crowd shouted encouragement. The bear stumbled. The big club crashed again.

The bear was game. He snapped his chain and staggered toward his assailant. The ogre struck again. Down went bruin. The crowd closed in on him and pounded him with great stones. The bear's dancing days were over.

The mother of Louis Kellermann lifted the child in her arms and fled down the road. The crowd pursued—howling, screaming, pelting the fugitives with sticks and stones. Thrice the mother fell. Thrice she picked herself up and ran on.

They reached the gate of a farmyard. A man stood at the gate—a lean, strong man with an evil face. Louis' mother, carrying Louis, slipped by the lean man into the yard, begging protection.

The lean man reached for a gun. He leveled it at the pursuers.

They halted, cursed him loudly, then broke into units and drifted back to examine the bleeding carcass of the bear.

At this point the terrifying film would be cut. Louis Kellermann would come slowly out of the hypnotic state produced by the detestable and yet uncontrollable desire to review that ugly episode of childhood. Broadway would again thrust its roar into his ears. He would glance suspiciously at his private secretary, reach blindly for the nearest letter on his desk, steady himself, clear his throat, and say something like this: "Miss Mac-Grew, if you please, take this letter: 'Manager, Kellermann Theater, Chicago. Dear Sir: We think that business could be slightly improved if—'" and so forth.

If it wasn't a letter to the Chicago manager, it was a letter to the manager of the Kellermann Theater at Detroit, or Philadelphia, or Omaha, or San Francisco. Or it was a letter to a great actor, a famous playwright or a world-renowned actress. For Louis Kellermann was—well, he was Louis Kellermann. That's all. . . .

There were other moments of lesser abstraction when Louis Kellermann reviewed the years that followed the arrival of himself and his mother at the farm of the lean man with the evil face. The man had given them sanctuary; he claimed them as slaves. He beat Louis' mother and ill-treated Louis.

Like clubfooted giants, those dreadful years had crawled along. The soul of Louis Kellermann fought against the cow-reek, the biting odor of goat, the choking greasy fragrance of sheep. He bedded with beasts. He lived on *Beuschel*—the lungs of calves pickled in vinegar—and on abominable *Krenfleisch*—sour pork stewed with horseradish. He slaved from dawn till the black night came down like a camel's-hair blanket from the slopes of the Kärtner Alpen.

Many times as Louis Kellermann viewed New York, the throbbing, pounding city that he had conquered, he wondered how the word "*America*" had come to him in that lonely farm above Klagenfurt. It must have come on the west winds during the dark nights. A whisper swept across the Atlantic, carried along by the soft winds of the Mediterranean, up, up over the Udine and the Julische Alps. The soul of Louis Kellermann had caught the whisper.

The boy could not write the word, because at that time he could not read or write, but he repeated it over and over to himself as he labored, fearful at times that it would slip from his memory: "*America! America! America!*"

The word seemed in some unexplainable manner to be invested with magical properties. Possibly the little quivering cells in the brain of Louis Kellermann saw, during those dreadful days, the splendid suite of offices on Broadway, saw the Kellermann chain of theaters reaching from New York to the Coast, saw the great actors and actresses waiting in the anterooms. There are no surprises for the soul. The spirit, said an Eastern sage, knows the heights it will attain long before it picks its fleshly habitation.

Curiously, the boy Louis did not know what the word "*Amer-*



ica" stood for. It had no meaning for him, yet it seemed the very abracadabra of life. Sometimes it worked miracles for him. On spring days, by continually repeating the word and looking fixedly at the fat white clouds that floated westward, he could break through the damnable cocoon of ammonia that enveloped the farm. By whispering it softly at the kitchen table he could eat the moldy *Fisolen* and the horrid curd dumplings—the *Topfenhaluska* over which the lean man smacked his lips.

Louis Kellermann wished in those days that he could consult with some one regarding this marvelous word that had crept into his brain—this strange term that built dreams, that sang songs, that made him hot and feverish during winter days and cooled him like a sweet draught in pulsing summer. He wished that he could go to the village and ask some one about the word, but the lean man who had enslaved his mother and himself forbade him to go to the village. Besides, he was afraid of the villagers who had killed the dancing bear. The vision of the black-bearded ogre came in the night and roweled his soul.

One day the lean man, gobbling like a wild swine on a truffle patch, paused and hurled a question at Louis. "What are you mumbling to yourself?" he asked. "Always I find you whispering. Tell me."

"It is a word," stammered Louis.

"What word?" demanded the slave master. "What does it mean?"

"I do not know what it means," answered the boy, "but—but I love it."



The black-bearded brute clambered into the car and dragged the girl to his side.

The lean man, face smeared with curds, glared at the youth. "Tell me!" he roared.

"It is the word *America*," gasped Louis. "I do not know what it means, but it seems nice to say it over and over. It makes me forget—"

He did not finish. The lean man sprang upon him and beat him mercilessly. He screamed out his hatred of mumbo-jumbo, of magic words, of queer charms. There was work to do; one should save one's breath for the tasks.

That night the wind was possessed of a strange gipsy playfulness. It caressed Louis Kellermann as he slept in the filthy stable. It established in some wonderful manner a *liaison* with the magical word. It knew of the word!

Louis awoke. He rose, crept to the couch on which his mother was sleeping, roused her quietly and beckoned her outside the house.

The woman with the green mole whimpered softly when the boy told of his plans. She shook her head when he begged her to accompany him. The dancing bear was dead; the hybrid musical instrument had been smashed to pieces in the flight from the crazy villagers. The road was closed to her forever.

Hurriedly she kissed Louis Kellermann on the forehead and scuttled back to her couch.

Louis Kellermann, guided by the word, headed southward. The wonderful word made music within his brain—splendid music. It played sarabands for his marching feet. It pierced his frail body like the melody of silver bugles blown by elves on mountain heights.

The little quivering cells must have known—must have known that the soul of Louis Kellermann was marching out to war, marching out to do the great things that it yearned to do: To build theaters! To stage great dramas! To make people laugh and weep! To clutch the soul of a crowd like a piece of dough and mold it as it willed!

Down through the narrow passes of the Steiner Alpen went Louis Kellermann, his soul singing as he walked—chanting the one word that wove a marching tune for his restless legs: "*America! America! America!*" A very devil of a word—possessing the merit of those strange "Words of Power" with which the ancient Egyptians were familiar and which are found in the seventh chapter of the Book of the Dead. He became to himself, at odd times, something different. He was (Continued on page 124)

Tides

By Julian Street

WITH the publication of "Rita Coventry" some years ago Julian Street won his place in the small first rank of American writers. His "Mr. Bisbee's Princess" (first published in this magazine) has been knighted by the O. Henry Memorial prize as the best short story of last year. Now "Tides," the achievement of his mature genius, is evoking an enthusiasm from our readers which confirms his distinction.

Illustrated by C. D. Williams

The Story So Far:

THAT quiet Chicago suburb of Oakland in the early eighties had been concerned for the most part with its politics and families, dwelling in ample houses insulated from each other by wide lawns and many vacant lots. But now unrest and change had come—and the shadow of scandal.

For one fateful day Luke Holden (regarded by his neighbors as a political infidel because he was a Democrat) brought the real-estate man Shire out to Oakland, and Shire saw his chance; moreover Holden met Shire's handsome daughter Florence that day; and though he had a wife and little girl of his own, a flame was kindled. Shire and Holden called on Zenas Wheelock, a pioneer and perhaps the most prominent citizen of Oakland; and after they had gone, the fine old patriarch shook his head. "I'm afraid," he said to his spinster daughter Martha (her fiancé, along with Zenas' son Lyman, had been killed in the Custer Massacre), "I'm afraid we're in for a bad spell."

The bad spell began to develop. Shire bought land and built—not the "mansion" he promised, but a block of garish close-packed houses. Luke Holden was seen more and more in the company of Florence Shire, and tongues wagged. And even to Zenas' grandson Alan, son of the bookworm widower Harris Wheelock, trouble came: An attractive boy from New York, Ray Norcross, had plainly made an impression on Blanche Holden. After Ray had gone, Blanche was caught in school writing a letter to him, and punished for it. To show his sympathy Alan sold his treasured cigarette-pictures and with the proceeds bought for Blanche a little silver "friendship ring."

A climax came at the housewarming which Shire gave with much ostentation and champagne. Holden conspicuously neglected his wife Nannie for the company of Florence Shire at that gaudy party. And even when Nannie was taken seriously ill, he allowed her to go home without him. And—next morning Mrs. Holden died. . . .

A scant year later Florence Shire and Holden were married. Blanche stayed with her beloved friends the Wheelocks for a time; but when her half-brother was born, she proved all too useful as a nursemaid, for the second Mrs. Holden was eager to resume the gayeties of life. . . . It was not long afterward that Holden found himself in financial difficulties, and went to Shire for help. The real-estate man advised him to develop or sell a piece of land between Holden's house and the Wheelocks, sold to Holden cheaply by Zenas Wheelock in order that Nannie might

have a garden, with the verbal agreement that it was not to be built upon.

Shortly thereafter Blanche was told that her father and step-mother were going for a trip to Florida, taking the baby with them, and that she was to stay with the Shires. Without avail she protested at the latter part of this arrangement; and only when she saw workmen tearing up her mother's garden and excavating for a new building did she understand it: her father had betrayed her mother's memory and his unwritten agreement with Zenas.

Blanche had become more and more unhappy that winter with the Shires—and Ray Norcross' impetuous wooing of her was made thus the easier by her longing for escape. She sought this escape by looking for some sort of employment, but—

"You're *not* going to work! Never, never!" Ray insisted one evening. "You're going to marry me, Blanche—that's what you're going to do! We'll get married tomorrow!"

He bent and kissed her.

Only a few days ago she had been asking herself how people knew they were in love, and already the question seemed to have been answered for her. This blessed sense of peace, of trembling happiness—this must be it. (*The story continues in detail:*)

OPPRESSED at the moment of awakening by an obscure feeling that something was wrong, Martha Wheelock recalled quickly the circumstances of the preceding day. Already the workmen were arriving next door. Through a window opening on what had been Nannie Holden's garden she distinctly heard the rattle and creak of wagons, the clink of harness-chains and the staccato of careless talk. Hereafter, she reflected, she must keep that window closed at night, opening instead the windows overlooking the back yard. Of course that meant morning light in her eyes unless she moved her bed. She could put the head of the bed where the desk now stood, but that would take the desk away from the gas-fixture, making an oil lamp necessary when she wrote at night, and the desk wasn't large enough comfortably to accommodate a lamp. Oh, well, there was always a way to fix things if you put your mind to it. Later she would see what she could do.

At breakfast her father was silent and abstracted; after luncheon she took her mending to the library, and sitting with him while he read, noticed that his eyes looked heavy; yet when presently she glanced up from her work and saw him nodding in his chair, she was surprised. As she tiptoed over to rescue the book which was slipping from his lap, he suddenly awoke, and she knew from his puzzled frown that he was astonished and chagrined at having been caught dozing.

"Do go upstairs and take a nap," she urged.

"You *know* I never take naps, Martha." He spoke sternly, but she understood that his sternness was in reality directed toward himself.

"I know," she assented, "but after the shock of yesterday—"

"It was no particular shock," he broke in, gently perverse. "I've long been expecting something of the kind."

"Even so, it has been upsetting and you look tired, Father."

"Tired?" With a little snort of contempt he echoed the obnoxious word. "Nonsense, Martha! Why, I could whip my weight in wildcats!"

Sad as she felt, Martha Wheelock with difficulty repressed a smile. As the word "tired" passed her lips, she had known what



"It's Luke Holden!" he declared, thumping the foot of the bed with his fist. "It's Luke Holden—the damned Democrat!"

his reply would be. "Whip my weight in wildcats" was the invariable formula; and now, as always, it was followed by a show of briskness.

"I'm going for a good walk," he declared, rising. "I feel the need of exercise." A few moments later he left the house, and Martha gathered up her sewing and ascended to her room, where, in her favorite low rocker beside the window she resumed her work.

After a time she heard her father return.

"Did you enjoy your walk, dear?" Her call to him as he reached the head of the stairs on his way to his room was less a question than a salutation.

"Yes, yes. But it is becoming rather warm."

How often she had sat like this with her mending, listening for his return, welcoming the sound of his step on the stairs, exchanging a word of greeting with him as he passed. It was in a sense an epitome of her life—mending for them all and listening for her father. How different from the life she had dreamed for herself when as a young girl they moved out here! She glanced at the framed photograph of a young soldier on her dresser and let her eyes fall again to her work. It might have been so different had he lived. Yet what would her father and Harris and Alan have done without her? And Blanche.

She slipped her darning-ball into one of Alan's socks, and finding a hole in the toe began to mend it. Evidently the Lord had intended her for this. Evidently He had not meant her to have a life of her own. There had been a time when she secretly rebelled at the thought, but she had long since acquired resigna-

tion, and looking back, she could not deny that in her servitude she had managed somehow to find happiness. All she asked, now, of life was that things should keep on as they were; that the rut in which she lived should become no rougher. And that, she realized, was much to ask. Ten or fifteen years ago she wouldn't have thought so, but as with middle age hope departs, wisdom takes its place. Hope, she reflected, seeks to form life to its own patterns, whereas wisdom, experienced in defeat, knows how to yield and let itself be formed. Defeat. Wisdom was the child of defeat—the child of hopes battered and dead. A beautiful child, too, if you weren't afraid to look at it.

Through her closed windows she heard the workmen, next door, urging on their horses, and from the back yard the sweet tenor voice of Jason:

"Down went McGinty to the bottom of the hole.

Then the driver of the cart

Give the load of coal a start,

And it took us half an hour to dig McGinty from the coal,

Dressed in his best suit of clothes."

In the absent-minded way of one who sings to lighten labor he would chant the chorus, stop for a time, and commence again, always the same refrain.

From the alley behind the stable echoed the shouts of romping children—a new crop of children now, whose play was carried on in alleys and back yards, since vacant lots had all but vanished. It was hard to realize that Alan, Blanche and those of their generation were no longer skylarking out there. Only a short time



ago she had been darning a little boy's stockings, putting new knees in them; and now as if by magic, the stockings had become socks almost as big as her father's. How fast things changed! Though she didn't feel so, she was really middle-aged. She didn't mind the crow's-feet as she did the fullness under her chin, the loss of contour. Yes, somehow, without noticing it, she had become a middle-aged woman living in an old-fashioned house.

Her mind ran back to the days when her father built this house, the first house on the block. How glad she had been when Luke and Nannie built next door, and when the Burchards and Dunhams came. Four houses made them feel quite citified. She thought of Alan's infancy, visioning him in a straw hat with a curled-up brim and ribbons hanging down behind; of his mother, of Nannie, of excursions she and Nannie had made with the two children, and summer evenings, long ago, when the neighbors came over and sat on the side porch in the darkness, listening to her father's stories of adventure in the Illinois wilderness. How happy they had been!

The day was fading, and sounds from next door told her that the workmen were going home. On her way to light the gas she glanced out of the window. The excavation was larger now. Today they had made much progress—"progress," she supposed, was what they called it!

Sitting down again, she continued her mending, and presently noticed that with each sway of her rocking-chair a faint squeak sounded from a loose board under the Brussels carpet. She had never thought about the board before, but now she realized that it had always squeaked, and that she liked the companionable sound.

From the kitchen below came the brazen note of the doorbell jangling on its coiled spring, and presently she heard the dull, blanketing slam of the front door, followed by Delia's step on the stairs.

But it wasn't callers; it was a note addressed to her in Blanche's handwriting. She opened it and read:

"Tuesday morning.

"Dearest Aunt Martha,

"I am writing this just before taking the train to Milwaukee, where Ray and I are to be married. I feel dreadfully about not telling you beforehand, but it seemed best not to mention it to anyone—not even to you—because there might be opposition and that would only complicate things. I don't know whether you would have advised against it or not. Probably you would have. I know I am very young to marry, and if I had a real home I might have waited awhile. Since Mother's death your house has been like home to me, and I would have gone to you now, but I couldn't stand to be there while the building was going on, knowing how Mother would feel about it, and what a blow it is to you all. And I couldn't bear it at the Shires' any longer, either.

"I don't think Father and Florence will care much, and I hope you won't feel that I have made a mistake. Ray has enough money to support us until he gets started with his literary work, and New York is the place for that. I wish you knew him better. He is very talented, and he thinks I can help him to succeed, but anyway he needs me to take care of him.

"I am going to miss all of you more than I dare to think



"Where have you been all this time?" she asked. "Why haven't you been to see me?"

about. It doesn't seem possible that I'll never again run through the gate between your yard and ours, and that I won't have you to go to about things. What would I ever have done without you—all of you! I am so glad I have pictures of you and Grandpa Wheelock to take with me, and I wish Alan would send me a new one when he gets some taken. The only photograph I have of him is that funny little one in his new suit with the medal on it, when he couldn't make his hair stick down. I wonder if he remembers the little friendship ring he gave me? Anyway, tell him I'm taking it with me.

"As soon as I know where I am going to be, I'll send you my address. Please write to me a lot and tell me all about everything.

"Your loving
"BLANCHE."

Blanche married!

The intelligence contained in the first sentence of the letter struck Martha Wheelock like a blow from a hammer, and she read the rest in a daze, less aware of the hurriedly written words before her eyes, than of thoughts like cries of protest reverberating through her mind.

Oh, no! It couldn't be! Blanche was only a child! She didn't realize! And the Norcross boy, of all people! Oh, no!

Leaping up, she ran to her father's door and knocked, and as she entered, burst out with the news.

"Blanche has eloped with Ray Norcross!"

Through the darkness she could see her father in his shirt-sleeves sitting on the edge of his bed. She hurried to his side,

thrust the missive into his hand and with trembling fingers struck a parlor match and lit the gas.

In silence the old man drew out his steel-rimmed spectacles, put them on, read the letter and handed it back to her.

"I suppose it's too late to do anything?" she said in a questioning tone.

He removed his spectacles, thrust them into his waistcoat pocket, rose from his seat on the bed, and with deliberation put on his coat.

"I suppose it's too late to do anything?" she repeated.

He stood for a moment looking at her intently as if considering the situation, his brow contracted, his eyes opened wider than usual; and when he spoke, it was only by implication that he answered her.

"It's Luke Holden!" he declared, thumping the foot of the sleigh-backed bed with his fist. "It's Luke Holden—the damned Democrat!"

Martha Wheelock had always been proud of her father's punctiliousness of speech—a punctiliousness the more remarkable in one who had led the rough life of the wilderness. No one could be more emphatic than he, but his emphasis was habitually achieved through the measured distinctness with which he uttered the words he desired to drive home. Profanity she had never before heard upon his lips, and she could not have been more amazed had Dr. Fleetwood cursed from his pulpit in St. Mark's. But even more amazing than her father's malediction she found her own reaction to it, for it filled her with a scandalous relief.

"Yes, Father," she breathed.



"Never again," Alan said. "I hope I'll never even hear her name again."

The old man let his arms fall to his sides. "There's nothing to be done," he told her. "They're married by now, and in any case there would be no way to find them." He sighed. "Poor little Blanche! I hope she hasn't jumped from the frying-pan into the fire."

"Do you think we ought to communicate with his parents or with the Shires?" she asked.

"I don't see why we should. She says nothing about it in her letter. No doubt she wrote them when she wrote you."

"Then the only thing to do," she said, "is to let her know as soon as possible that we stand by her. She'll know it without being told, but she'll be glad of a message from us." She felt for the watch attached to the long gold chain that hung about her neck, drew it from the little pocket at her belt, snapped open the cover and looked at the time.

"Alan said he'd be home this evening," she went on, "and that was the six-thirty-nine that just went by. He ought to be here now." She sighed, and the old man glanced quickly at her face, asking:

"Do you think this is going to hurt him much?"

"I don't know," she said. "He's not easy to read."

To this Zenas Wheelock assented with a nod, and there fell a little silence.

"When they were children," she presently continued in a reminiscent tone, "Nannie and I used to have a little dream—they've

always been so fond of each other—but lately—well, I don't know. And there's Leta. But I can't believe that's serious, although her mother talks about Alan a good deal." She paused, took the clothes-brush from his bureau, appeared to examine the bristles, and uttered a seeming *non sequitur*: "The Purnells still owe Miss Lightner for the last two seasons."

"Hm-m," was her father's unilluminating comment as from the hall below came the sound of the front door closing.

"There he is now!" exclaimed Martha with a start, and as she heard Alan come bounding up the stairs, she quickly put down the brush, as if for some reason she feared to have him find it in her hand.

Chapter Twenty

"WHAT'S the matter, Auntie?"

Her face must have shown him that she was troubled. "Alan," she began, "we've had bad news." For a moment she paused, seeking buffer phrases, but finding none, ended with a flat statement of the case: "Blanche has eloped with Ray Norcross."

His head jerked forward.

"She—she has?"

Martha nodded. "This came a little while ago. There are messages in it for you."



She gave him Blanche's letter, and as he stood by the gas-fixture, reading it, with the light upon his frowning face, she gazed at him, trying to judge him as if he were a stranger.

Yes, he was a man. Living in the house with him, darning his big socks, hearing his deep, resonant voice, she had nevertheless kept on thinking of him as a boy, and even now that she told herself he was a man, she found it difficult to grasp the actuality.

He was a Wheelock, too. Curious how often Nature, in transmitting traits, would skip a generation. Alan was not at all like Harris—poor Harris, always vaguely puttering about—but was like his grandfather. People often spoke of the resemblance, and she had always seen it, but never so clearly as she saw it now. The triangular form of his back, mounting from narrow hips to broad shoulders, the sturdy poise of neck and head, the vigorous sculpturing of forehead, cheek, nose and jaw, the wiry brown hair, no longer shaggy like a boy's, these combined not only to assure her that Alan had grown up, but to create for her a vivid picture of her father as he must have looked in his young manhood.

Shifting her eyes to her father, who had sat down in his arm-chair and was gazing abstractedly into the blue darkness beyond the windowpane, she seemed to see, beneath his snowy eyebrows and cross-hatched wrinkles, the visage of the youth he had been. And now, with a sense of profound discovery, there came to her

a vision of Alan and his grandfather, not as separate entities, but joined together like the two halves of a shining cycle, all but complete.

Of cycles the whole of nature and of history seemed to be composed—cycles of space and time, the solar system, the recurrent seasons, the tides with their endless ebb and flow, war and peace, prosperity and panic, justice and injustice, pleasure and pain, riches and poverty, human generations, individual human lives, each traveling its arc like a relay-runner covering his segment of the course and dropping out as the torch is seized by a younger hand. As his grandfather had received the torch from seafaring progenitors, so Alan must receive it from his grandfather and bear it forward.

Her meditations were interrupted by her nephew's voice.

"My goodness!" he muttered, as if speaking to himself. Having read the letter, he continued to stare at it blankly, stroking the back of his head with one hand. "My goodness!"

Zenas Wheelock turned slowly in his chair.

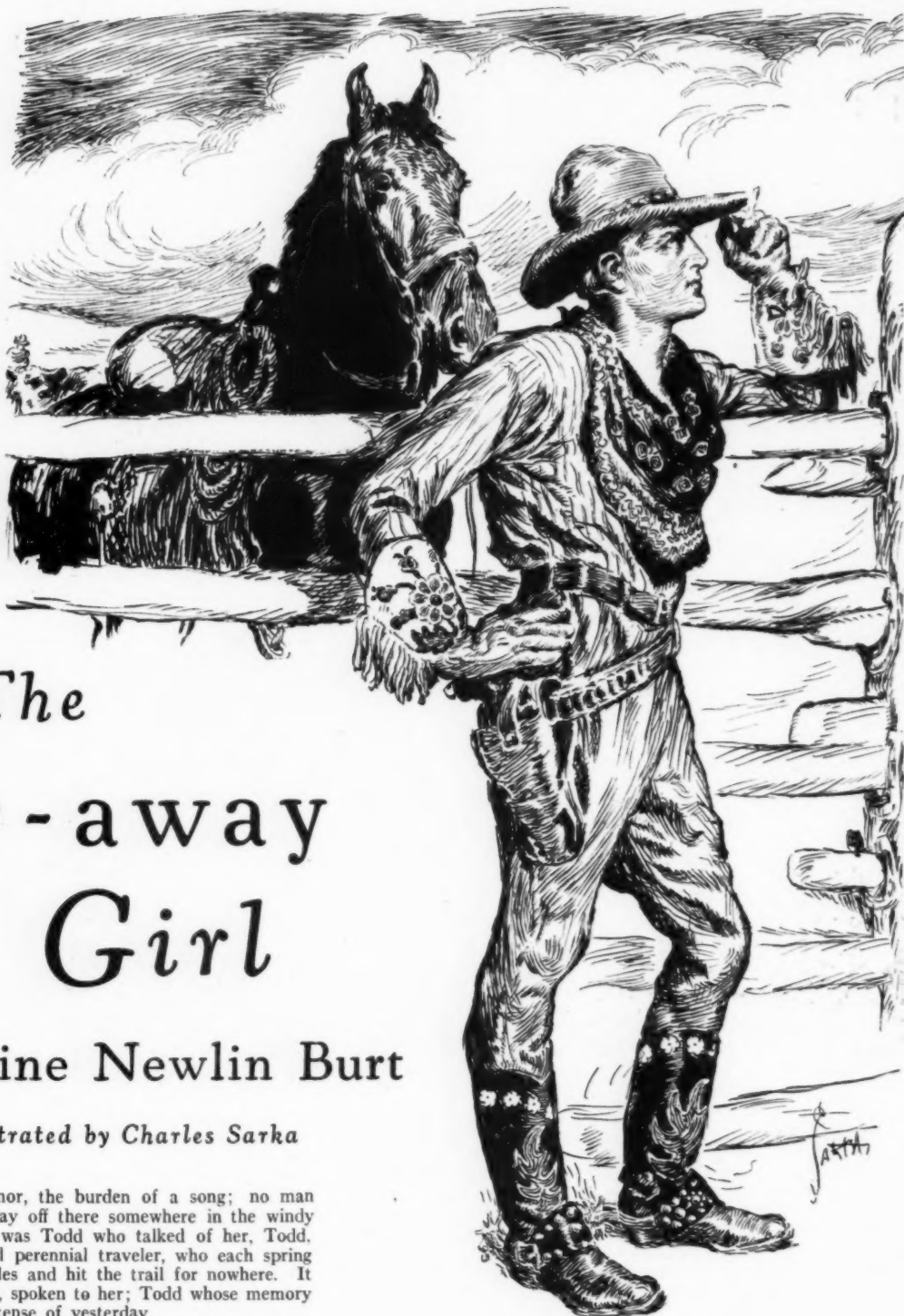
"Alan," he inquired, "just what sort of boy is this young Norcross?"

His grandson thrust his hands into his trousers pockets and took a turn up and down the room.

"I've thought a good deal about that," he answered, "and I'm hanged if I really know. He's always seemed to me a queer fish—all contradictions."

(Continued on page 152)

NEXT time you are in Wyoming or Montana, ask the native riding beside you which of our writers best reflects Western life. Likely he'll answer: "There's a woman over Jackson Hole way that comes closest. Her story 'The Brandin' Iron' was a corker." And no higher compliment could be offered Mrs. Burt.



The Far-away Girl

By

Katharine Newlin Burt

Illustrated by Charles Sarka

SHE was a legend, a rumor, the burden of a song; no man knew her; she lived away off there somewhere in the windy hills of Hidden Creek. It was Todd who talked of her, Todd, old-timer, ex-pro prospector and perennial traveler, who each spring packed up his little old mules and hit the trail for nowhere. It was Todd who had seen her, spoken to her; Todd whose memory put all past years into the tense of yesterday.

She possessed the imagination of young Laird MacDougal as it was doomed to be possessed, as the rim of purple moors had held the fancy of his Scotch forefathers, and as a dream of new lands beyond had led them to a Western wilderness. It was a wilderness no longer, that portion of the MacDougals' choosing. Laird's father held the land between two ranges, and his cattle, like those in the psalm, were upon a hundred hills—while Laird read books, and possessed the tongue and training of this race of gentlemen-dreamers. A cowboy on his father's range he might call himself, since he had the skill, the lithe hips, the supple waist, the slender feet and well-kept hands of his trade; but he was none the less a MacDougal of that Chieftain's stronghold in the Scottish hills, and his dream was of a woman whose beauty had been rumored and unknown.

To Dossie Blair, a girl of Dougal,—for the valley town carried his grandfather's name,—Laird repeated Todd's enchanting hints of a remembered witchery. "And if that rough stump of a man could feel his sap stirred by her eyes," Laird reasoned, "think what they could do to the veins of one and twenty!"

"What did Todd say she looked like?" asked Dossie Blair, trained in the hard school of confidante to a MacDougal.

She sat above him on the top rail of one of his father's fences, her own father having brought her up to the ranch for a day of—well, of Laird. The young man leaned beside her. He had fixed his frosty eyes, brilliant with the dazed spangles of a star-seeker, upon the distance which held the far-away girl of his



"Singing Water," murmured Dossie with her wistful tone. "Why don't you go, Laird?"

desire. Her mountains were beyond these mountains and beyond those invisible beyond. Her country was a lost and perilous land, not lightly to be visited. There lay between it and a lover, the Sinking River, which swallowed horse and man whole at the first ignorant step; there lay the Hole, a hiding-place for murderers; there lay an ugly country of loco and poison weed, of little dusty snakes, of clouds of venomous mosquitoes like a plague from Egypt; and somewhere off there was Lost Man's Forest, true to its name, a country of mysterious bewilderment. Oh, very far and blue and inaccessible lay the home of his desire!

"She has gray eyes," said Laird softly. Dossie dropped her lids. "And Todd said you'd hold your breath for fear she'd move or smile or spoil her beauty—until she moved or smiled, and then you knew what beauty really was."

"Did Todd say that?" asked Dossie Blair.

"Those weren't just his words— And she isn't what you'd call high-colored; but she has a dark red mouth which is sometimes small and grave, but which goes into scarlet curves, running out into her cheeks, for smiling. You can't forget that smile; it makes you jump, changing her so,"—Dossie's mouth was very grave,—and her eyelashes have golden tips and sort of sparkle—You could hardly believe unless you'd watched 'em. But it's the shape of her face, like a white stone set in black hair, and it is her throat and the way she holds her chin, and it is her—her body and her motions—everything she does or says—a voice like the fountain in the fairy-story that could speak—"

"Singing Water," murmured Dossie, bringing with her wistful tone a queer quick chill of rapture to Laird's heart.

"Yes, Singing Water. Oh, Dossie,"—he flung up his eyes to her face,—to me she's the one real woman in the world. I've got to go!"

"Why don't you go, Laird?" she said.

ON the fourth night of Laird's journey he made camp on the crest of his first range. He had meant to drop over the divide and pitch his tepee in a homelier spot, but somewhere among the jumble of jack-pines and crumpled land he had lost the faint trail, had gone several degrees west of his direction; and darkness with a meadow of good pony-feed had found him simultaneously at this grave and soundless height.

He thought, as he pitched his tent and turned his hungry ponies free, that he had never seen so windless a high meadow. It ran up like the shoulder of a breaking wave to a sheer cliff, beyond which lay the dark, vast and voiceless end of his adventure, and its slopes below were closed in by the stunted climbers of the forest, standing about like a mob of ragged dwarfs. It was cold at this height, and the queer, deep pool with no visible outlet, cupped in the middle of that meadow and held

there, he might fancy, by grotesque rocks in the shapes of petrified beasts and cowering men, made a hole through reality into a giddy pit of stars. Without wind a mountain height at dark is terrible. It has no voice.

The two ponies cropped, and the bell clinked. Laird strained his ears to listen to the starred emptiness above the crackle of his suddenly human fire. He was eating his hot cakes and coffee when, looking up for no reason, he felt his heart plunge. He saw that a man stood just beyond his fire. How in God's name he had got there, even on moccasined feet, without a warning crunch or crackle, was horribly incomprehensible. Just back of him the dwarf-mob advanced, so that with the camp-fire light to put walls before Laird's eyes, it was not so strange that the figure had advanced unseen; but, in the name of loneliness and night, this was a still-footed wayfarer!

Laird did not rise. He set down his cup with a frozen deliberateness and jerked his gun forward on his hip.

The man's dark slit of a mouth moved under the shadow of his hat.

"Howdy," he said hoarsely.

He sat down opposite his host, laid a gun across his knees and held out two great gaunt hands to the blaze.

Laird gave him coffee and beans and watched him eat. No further word was spoken. The night trod over them, high-headed under its stars. Neither host nor guest moved. They sat with their guns ready, staring, their lips grim, tight, unsmiling. Once or twice Laird nodded and caught himself back as from the edge of a sheer height. But at dawn abruptly he ceased to be afraid.

"Let the mad fool kill me if he likes," said the sleep-insistent brain of twenty, and rolling himself defiantly in his blanket, he slept.

When he awoke, hot with the sun in his face, and sat up, there was no stranger by the dead circle of a burnt-out fire.

Painstakingly Laird examined his belongings: tepee and its contents present and accounted for, money in his shirt, gun loaded on his thigh, saddles, blankets, provisions, even his gilded spurs, intact. He took up his hackamores, and whistling to the tune of laughter, went out to catch up Roany and the Lass. The Lass came eagerly to meet him, but Roany, with his rope, was gone. Now, what the loss of a rope means to a drifting cowboy only a drifting cowboy knows, and as for Roany—he was a horse with every virtue possible to horseflesh and with, besides, the dangerous gifts of beauty and of speed: a birthday gift from the boy's father. After an hour's white-hot and vain pursuit, Laird stumbled back, cursing himself, his folly, his tenderfoot incredible slackness. To be so easy, such a fool, to sleep! He flung himself down in his

tent, drawing a hand more than once across his stinging eyes. Roany, stolen by a ghoulish with a thin gray mouth! Roany! The practical effects of his loss soon dried emotion. Well, he'd pack his stuff and foot it. Likely he could buy a pony somewhere—somewheres—trade it, maybe, on his way.

A rider is never a willing hiker. Laird grimly slung his saddle, his sleek embroidered boots and the gilded spurs, across the Lass' squaw-hitch, and traveled down from his unlucky camp on dogged moccasined feet. He could make just as good time, likely, without Roany for a great part of the way, but the humiliation hurt. Was he not riding for the favor of a lady, and what is a knight-errant without his "red-roan steed of steeds?"

Two sleeps later, as the Indians say, he had his chance to buy a pony.

On his way down a narrow winding cañon Laird met with two jovial red-faced youngsters followed by a string of likely-looking horses plunging and sweating on a way not designed for horses' hoofs at all. The youths cursed with astonishment when Laird and his hackamore-led pack-horse emerged from the fastness there above them. They were not expecting to meet anyone, they said, excusing what seemed like an excessive panic, an involuntary hitching of nervous six-shooters. Laird, wise in panic and suspicion since his late adventure, excused them. He was terribly glad to speak. They looked one another over and exchanged the "makings." With them Laird drove an easy bargain for a riding-horse. Return Ticket was a beauty, bright as ginger, with the brow of gentleness and the nose of sense. One youth said:

"But he's a durned nuisance for quittin' camp. He's one of these here ornery no-account quitters—that's what he is; always hankerin' to be back on Mamma's range. Plumb tired of huntin' him, catchin' him up, picketin' and bellin' him. Wont never get him acrost this here range, and if we does he'll be takin' back ag'in over these here rocks. Hobbles? Say, they don't mean nothin' to that rock-jumpin', trail-smellin', badger-eatin', dew-drinkin'—” And so forth. "But seein' as you're travelin' his way, with only the two horses to handle—”

Laird closed the bargain and went his way, prettily mounted and restored to self-respect. He meant, he told himself in Western travel-tongue, to ride plumb down the main street of the sudden little town which decorated the center of this valley. But its inhabitants—provincial folk they were, suspicious and excitable—willed otherwise.

Laird, emerging on the highroad, beheld on the top of its nearest rise a cloud of dust. A shout seemed to recognize him savagely, and bullets spat into the gravel at his pony's feet. He couldn't wait for explanations; the men of the hilltop were charging him. He let the Lass go, and spurring Ticket, found himself carried elsewhere on a rocking wind. The running speed of Ticket was equaled only by his cleverness in getting through timber when his new master plunged him presently into the shelter of the woods.

After a night of mysterious and fugitive alarms, Laird found himself, with his trembling and drooping horse, facing dawn on a black, piney slope above a river. He had lost the Lass, his tent and his provisions. A package of raisins, a dusty doughnut or so packed with cold bacon in his saddle-pocket, were left. He had considerable money, but in this desolate new land with its unnamed river there seemed to be no roof, no smoke, no voice. A coyote, to be sure, was laughing somewhere, but it was not a contagious or encouraging sort of laughter. The coyote sounded hungrier and more alone in his hysteria than any other coyote Laird had ever heard.

He sat down, made a cigarette with fingers not so sure as usual, and like a Westerner rather than a MacDougal, he started to "figure these things out." The horse that cropped, edging always furtively back toward the country they had traveled, was certainly a stolen horse. His red-faced, hearty, honest-spoken owners were successful rustlers hampered in their get-away by the habits of Return Ticket. Laird's mount had drawn off an immediate pursuit. Ticket had probably been the best-known pony in his neighborhood. Oh, hell, thought Laird, he'd played the tenderfoot again! And the Lass—likely they'd take care of her; likely he'd pick her up on his way back—

But the thought of going back brought visions to MacDougal! His next care was for his whereabouts, and he got out his penciled chart. Todd had worked it out for him, Todd who knew the world as a fox knows it, by smell and running foot.

That stream below him couldn't be Sinking River so soon. He wasn't due at Sinking River for another two days. He and Ticket had sure done some traveling, but still, it couldn't be Sinking River, hardly—not just yet. He didn't want it to be Sinking River. He was tired.

Nevertheless, having to his own relief decided that this emphatically was Slumber Creek, he pushed on. A man with a package of dried raisins and two hard doughnuts can't afford to linger, even if he leaves out of reckoning the chance of being shot at from behind by the excitable former owner of an extraordinary horse.

THAT horse, however, was presently found lacking in a major virtue. He was not a good river-horse. He balked determinedly, obstinately, angrily on the brink of Slumber Creek. Laird, after much selective riding up and down the banks of the wide, slow-moving stream, had chosen a ridgy ford of shallow water over small golden stones; it chuckled pleasantly. On the opposite side there was a low, willowy land backed by the somber darkness of that endless forest in which it seemed now to Laird he had been traveling, silent, watchful, shiftily imprisoned, since his birth. It was pleasant out here in the strong morning sun, with a sound of water and of breezy grass, the smell of thistles, sunflowers, gentians and juicy yellow cowslips. Queer not to see a moose—this was good moose-country, this broad willowy meadow.

With stern, lean knees and resolute spurs and, in the end, with braided quirt, he fought Ticket. Finding the last stinging argument unanswerable, Ticket with a desperate snort set his forefeet into the stream and began a humped and tightened exploration of Laird's ford. When



The music stopped; footsteps came slowly; the door opened.



"I'll hev to show you, then," said Jim. "One inch further back, kid, and then we hit it with a crowbar."

they were halfway over safely, Ticket began to buck. Laird lost his temper. He swore and pulled at his carefully loosened rein; and with that, Ticket and he plunged suddenly up to the horse's chin, Laird's waist—not into swimming water but into a greedy sand which fastened upon their frantic limbs like the tentacles of a loathsome devilfish.

Laird managed to climb upon his saddle, and holding to the reins, he leaped, missing the pebbly ridge, caught at it and drew himself to the hard bottom with a shout:

"I've got you, Ticket, old man. Steady, there! Come on! Keep up your heart."


But Ticket, for all his virtues, was not a river-horse. He had been born in a dry country. He had no heart for bogs, no courage against the unseen, numbing monsters of the mud. In spite of all Laird's struggles, his urging prayers and cursings, his racked arms and broken rein, Ticket went down, and his bright ginger body left the sun.

Wet and draggled, his arm half-dislocated by the unequal struggle against Ticket's suicidal despair, Laird splashed his way

up from the treacherous swamp to the sane contemplative pines, and lay down in an emptiness, a desolation of loneliness such as he had never imagined in his blackest dreams.

But he had crossed Sinking River,—after all, it must be Sinking River,—and he was still alive. He ate a doughnut and six raisins, drank from a spring where he bathed his face,—hot, and stung with a boy's tears for Ticket's end,—and dragging himself to a sun-flecked, scented opening, he slept. A few yards away a mother grizzly smelled the bacon in his pocket, seriously considered an investigation, but not liking so well the general odor of Laird MacDougal which went with the bacon, she decided to go back to forage in the neighborhood of the hollow tree wherein she had left her cubs.

FOR two terrible deep days the forest held Laird as in-a-green and mazy spider's-web. He seemed sometimes to be climbing up a ladder of striped air, sometimes to be crawling at the sedgy bottom of unfathomed ocean water, sometimes to be stalking like a tree with trees; then in the dark (Continued on page 130)



The butler gasped.
"But, Mr. Inspector,
you don't think that
Chinese gentle-
man, so friendly—"

The Starbuck Puzzle

By

Elsa Barker

Illustrated by T. D. Skidmore

THE trouble with most detective stories is that in order to make the crime fantastic and the motive obscure, the writer is likely to sacrifice plausibility. Elsa Barker makes no such error in this story of another of Dexter Drake's achievements, as the surprised reader will agree, when he or she reaches the very end of this fascinating tale.

IT was only a few days before the notorious Starbuck murder case thrilled New York and the whole country, that my friend Dexter Drake suggested that I share his apartment with him.

"Until, my dear Howard," the detective smiled, "you choose a less dangerous occupation, you may as well continue to help me in my business of criminal-hunting. An idle life in a Broadway hotel is not good for a young college man, and I understand you're not going in for the football games this year."

So that is how I came to live at close quarters with the man whose mysterious career of free-lance crime-detection had fascinated me from the day of our first meeting.

One morning before breakfast, as I was arranging the last of my unpacked belongings in a drawer of the chiffonier, Drake came and stood in the open doorway of the bedroom he had assigned me.

"Good morning, Howard."

There was an elastic tension in the poise of that slender tall figure which told me that something was in the wind. And the look of alertness on his aquiline dark face—always I saw that look when some new mystery was calling him to action.

"Inspector Sorby has just telephoned," he said. "An important man who arrived in New York last night, after thirty years' residence in China—Dr. Ira Starbuck—was found stabbed half an hour ago in a private house in West Twenty-first Street. A physician next door, whom the terrified butler dragged in, declares that Dr. Starbuck met his death between two and three o'clock this morning, that he was probably murdered in his sleep. Why, not five minutes ago I was reading in the *Times* of his arrival! He had his own hospital in Peking—his name often appeared in American medical journals."

"How extraordinary—" I began.

"But wait." The detective put up his hand. "I haven't told you all of it. Sorby says that the old doctor's nephew, George Starbuck, in whose New York house he was killed, was also attacked yesterday afternoon on a lonely road near Yonkers, and that he too might have been killed if he hadn't thrown himself over a steep rock and escaped his assailant. One William Witherspoon, who lives round the corner on Park Avenue, will be here in five minutes to take us downtown in his car."

"But who," I asked, "is William Witherspoon?"

"Why, he seems to have known Dr. Ira Starbuck when he was a young man, before he went to China. The butler down there in George Starbuck's house overheard Dr. Starbuck, at ten o'clock

last night, making a telephone appointment with William Witherspoon for sometime today, so the butler gave Witherspoon's name to the police. As soon as Sorby told me, I telephoned Witherspoon myself, learned that he was just going down there in his own car, and asked him to stop for me. I like to question men before the police have confused them. Sorby called me right in on the case because I once lived in China. But come! We must swallow some coffee."

It was a little old man of perhaps seventy, very dapper, very wrinkled, who was shown into the sitting-room a few minutes later.

Drake strode forward to shake hands with him, then introduced me:

"My friend and assistant, Mr. Paul Howard—Mr. Witherspoon."

"How do you do, sir? This is a most shocking occurrence—shocking!"

His cracked voice shook with excitement, and the hand he gave me was clammy cold. "I was never so horrified in my life!"

As he jerked up his head, his chin was thrust forward, and each separate white hair of his neatly trimmed square beard seemed to move and bristle. An excitable old man. His faded blue eyes fairly blazed.

But Drake's manner was utterly calm now, almost casual, and it had its soothing effect. Of course the detective was after facts—not ejaculations of horror. Even before we got down to the street, where a small private car was standing, Mr. Witherspoon's demeanor had undergone a change. The rate of his breathing was slower.

As I took my place on the little drop-seat of the car, facing them, Drake said, in the blandest of everyday tones:

"Can you remember, Mr. Witherspoon, what Dr. Ira Starbuck said to you last night at ten o'clock, when he called you on the phone?"

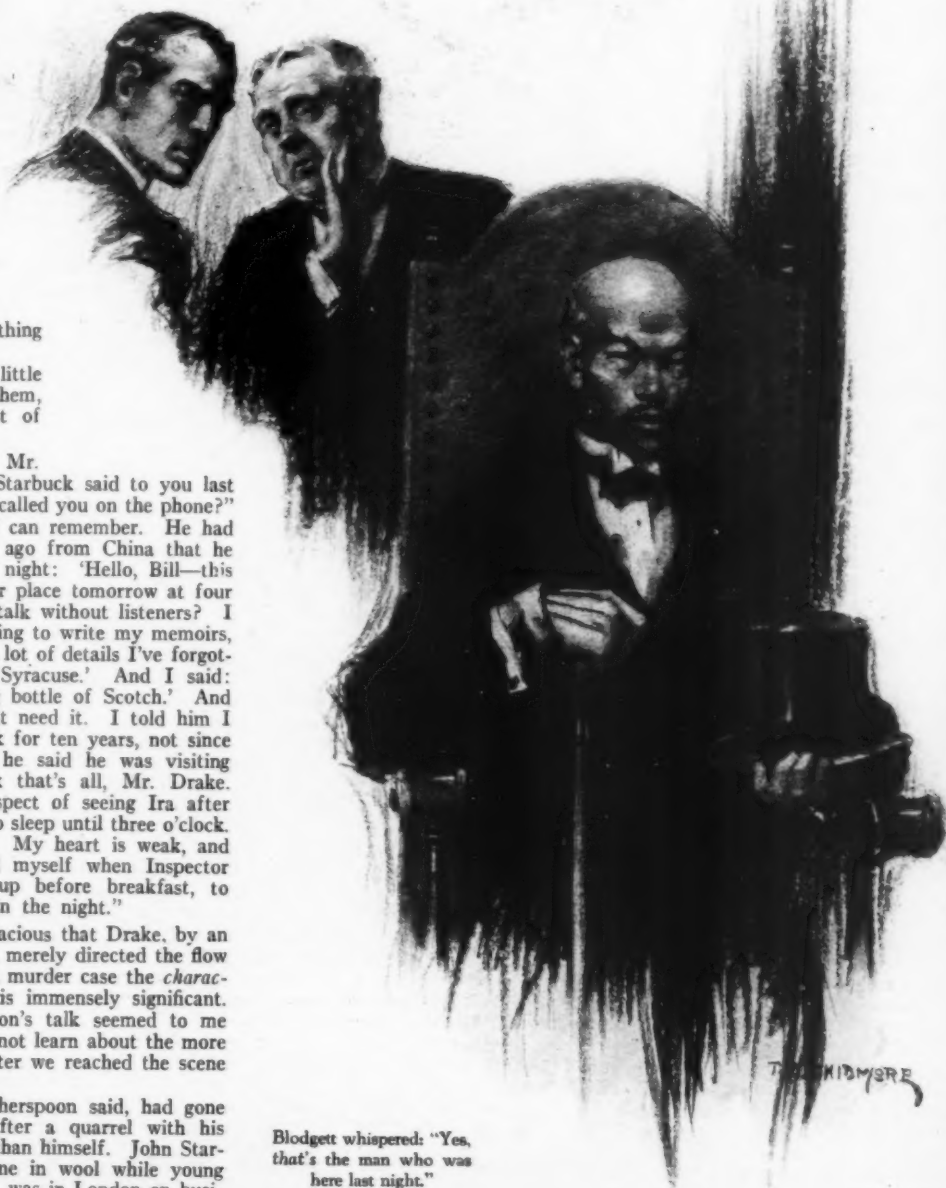
"Remember? Of course I can remember. He had written me a month or two ago from China that he was coming, and he said last night: 'Hello, Bill—this is Ira. If I come up to your place tomorrow at four o'clock, can we have a long talk without listeners? I want to consult you. I'm going to write my memoirs, and maybe you'll remember a lot of details I've forgotten about the old days in Syracuse.' And I said: 'Come along. I've got a big bottle of Scotch.' And he laughed and said he might need it. I told him I hadn't talked with a Starbuck for ten years, not since his brother John died, and he said he was visiting John's son George. I think that's all, Mr. Drake. I was so excited at the prospect of seeing Ira after thirty years that I didn't go to sleep until three o'clock. I'm a light sleeper, anyhow. My heart is weak, and I wonder I didn't fall dead myself when Inspector What's-his-name called me up before breakfast, to say Ira had been murdered in the night."

The old fellow was so loquacious that Drake, by an adroit question now and then, merely directed the flow of his reminiscences—for in a murder case the character of the murdered person is immensely significant. But some of Mr. Witherspoon's talk seemed to me mere malicious gossip. I did not learn about the more definite Chinese clues until after we reached the scene of the crime.

Dr. Ira Starbuck, Mr. Witherspoon said, had gone to China thirty years ago after a quarrel with his brother John, ten years older than himself. John Starbuck, who had made a fortune in wool while young Ira was in the medical college, was in London on busi-

ness during the summer of 1895, when his only son and heir, George Starbuck, was born in a hired cottage near Syracuse. Dr. Ira had stayed two months at that cottage with John's young wife and her sister Sarah, and had made frequent visits all that year—and John was furious. Ira met John in New York on his return from London; a quarrel had ensued, and the two brothers never saw each other again—never even wrote to each other. When John died in 1915, he left not one cent to his brother Ira, only a few thousand to his wife's sister Sarah, who had brought up young George after he was left motherless; the bulk of the fortune went to George—the young man who had been attacked the day before in Yonkers.

Mr. Witherspoon said that Dr. Ira had recently written him that he was disliked by a certain political faction in China, that his finances were shaky, and that he was losing his hospital. Also Ira had told him that three or four months ago, when he determined to come back to America, he had written from China to young George, his nephew,—whom he had not seen since George was two months old,—and George had responded with a cordial



Blodgett whispered: "Yes, that's the man who was here last night."

invitation to his uncle to come straight to his house in New York. Dr. Ira had never married; he was alone in the world, and young George was his only near relative.

"I think," Mr. Witherspoon said, "from something Ira told me just before he went to China in 1895, that the rich brother John had always been jealous of his young wife's liking for Ira. Mrs. Starbuck's name was Madelon, poor thing! And you know,"—the little old man leaned forward in the car, excitedly clutching Drake's arm,— "if John Starbuck wronged his young brother, Dr. Ira, that summer thirty years ago, he met with a swift and terrible retribution. John Starbuck never saw his young wife again! She was killed, with three members of her own family, in a railway-wreck between Syracuse and New York, where she was coming to join her husband. Her sister Sarah was with her—I forget Sarah's married name—and the sister's husband and her two children were killed, and twenty-seven other persons—I remember the number precisely, thirty-one in all; and many more were injured. It was one of the worst railway wrecks in the history of New York State. Little George Starbuck was miraculously saved by a negro porter, and a friend of my own who was in the wreck was dragged out with both legs broken. And now Dr. Ira Starbuck is murdered! I think I'm justified in saying, Mr. Drake, that the Starbucks seem to be followed by some malignant destiny. It's all too strange and horrible for a man of my years and heart-trouble to cope with, and as soon as I've seen the police and answered their questions, I'm going straight home and to bed, and send for the doctor to give me a quieting potion."

I think he would have rattled on breathlessly for another ten minutes, if the car had not drawn up to the curb and stopped. We had arrived at the scene of the crime.

"I forgot to tell you, Mr. Drake, that John's wife Madelon came from a very ordinary family in Syracuse. Neither the Witherspoons nor the Starbucks nor any of the other best people had ever heard of them until John fell in love with the pretty brown-eyed Madelon, twenty years younger than himself, and married her. And I recall now Madelon's sister's name—it was Biggs, Sarah Biggs. She was older than Madelon, and she had been a dressmaker. Oh!" He turned. "I also forgot to tell you that Ira mentioned last night that he had kept diaries all the years he was in China." Again Mr. Witherspoon threw up his head, and the white beard on his chin stuck out: "I never liked John Starbuck, and I seldom saw him, and I don't even know young George. I was Ira's friend—not theirs."

The Starbuck house, a plain three-story structure of red brick, was set about thirty feet back from the street, behind wrought-iron gates and a tall iron fence. The house-front extended the full width of the forty-foot lot. Before it was a grass-plot with flower-beds; but on the two sides this surprising oasis of green was bounded by the stark bare walls of towering modern apartment-houses.

On the sidewalk a small crowd had already collected and the young policeman who guarded the gates only let us through when Drake told him who he was, and that Inspector Sorby had sent for us. The large central door of the house stood open, guarded by another policeman, who said the Inspector was in the west front bedroom on the second floor, where the body had been found.

The house had a wide hall, with rooms on both sides, and a stairway at the back. When we reached the second floor and turned toward the front, we saw two open doors—the one on the left leading into a library, the one on the right leading into a bedroom where men were standing about. Drake strode forward and stood in the doorway, Mr. Witherspoon and I behind him.

Then the burly figure of Inspector Sorby detached itself and came forward. As he shook hands with Drake, he muttered:

"It looks pretty complicated." The Inspector's broad, lineless but unyouthful face was blank. "There's the body—on the bed."

Mr. Witherspoon was wringing his hands and moaning: "Oh, my God!"

In the center of a large carved-oak bed, right before us, lay—in his night-clothes—a small man about sixty, with a dead yellow face and iron-gray hair. The sightless eyes were half-open; the

slender hands lay inert against the sheet, brown with blood-stains. Sticking straight up from his heart was the cloisonné hilt of a Chinese dagger; the jewel-like colors of the enamel caught the light streaming in from the two broad windows.

Drake made a little grating noise in his throat. My legs went suddenly wobbly. And then I was conscious that Mr. Witherspoon, in hysterics, was being led out of the room by somebody.

"The medical examiner hasn't got here yet," Sorby said. "No finger-prints on the dagger—the murderer must have worn gloves."

Drake turned away from the bed then. He just stood there, his tall, masterful figure dominating the room. His dark bright eyes were taking in everything—the heavy old-fashioned furniture, the trunks and bags, the dead man's gray coat and trousers and light-blue linen shirt placed neatly over a chair-back, the empty shoes on the floor beside the bed.

Drake's eyes fixed themselves on an open window in the back wall of the room near the corner, and just beyond the door of a bathroom.

"Ah!" He drew in his breath sharply. "So that's it!"

"Yes," Sorby said, "there's a long slit, five feet wide, for light and air, the whole length of the house behind this room—but only above the ground floor. That makes a sort of runway. The murderer came up the far end of it, with a ladder from the yard."

I followed Drake to that window and looked down. Some four feet below the window-ledge was the slate roof—or floor, I should say—of that runway.

"It's the same on both sides of the house," Sorby said; "and see—that bathroom window there, and the side-window of the large bedroom at the back, also look out on this runway. The back yard goes right through to the street behind. There's a garage on one side, a small storage building on the other. This place is a relic of old New York. I wonder it hasn't been sold and cut up long ago."

Drake asked Sorby if the police were keeping reporters out of the back yard; then he turned his attention to the other men in the room.

"You're the butler, of course," he said to a large, oldish man whose round face was drawn and tear-stained. "You found the body?"

"Yes sir." The man came forward and stood with his hands visibly trembling, his gray eyes searching the detective's face. "Blodgett is my name. I brought Dr. Starbuck's breakfast at eight o'clock. The door was locked. When he didn't answer, I came through the bathroom—that wasn't locked. When I saw him, I almost dropped the tray. You see, sir,"—the man's teeth chattered,— "Mr. George had telephoned me last night about the attack on him, in Yonkers; but he told me not to tell the old doctor, his uncle—just to say he had a fall, and would rest over—





"My God, Drake,"
Sorby was saying. "He
might have shot you,
or me!"

Further ques-
tioned by Drake, the
butler said that his
master George Star-
buck had gone to
Yonkers yesterday
by train, and that
he must have been
followed. Dr. Star-
buck had written
his nephew that he

would like to go into the coun-
try somewhere, almost at once,
as he had some writing to do,
and Mr. George went to Yon-
kers to make sure the house was
in shape. Only a gardener-
caretaker and his wife were kept
at the Yonkers place. It was
just before Dr. Starbuck's train-
time that Mr. George had tele-
phoned first, telling the butler

to make his uncle comfortable and ex-
plain about the fall. Then just before
dinner Mr. George had called up
again, asked to speak with his uncle,
and the butler had heard the old man's
joyous greeting of his nephew, heard
his anxious inquiries, his advice to rub
the muscles with ointment—the Doc-
tor would look Mr. George over him-
self in the morning when he got home.

"I think, sir, the attack on Mr.
George was to get him out of the way,
because the murderer, in order to
reach Dr. Starbuck's window, would
have had to pass the open window of
Mr. George's bedroom here, at the
rear of this floor, which looks right
out on that shaft. Mr. George said
the man who attacked him in Yonkers
looked like a Chinaman in American
clothes, but he couldn't be sure, be-
cause the man rushed out from be-
hind some bushes and ran at him with
a knife, and Mr. George leaped down
that steep rock—he fell most of the
way."

The next thing we learned from the
butler was even more staggering. Dr.
Ira Starbuck, after eating his solitary
dinner last night, had said that he ex-
pected a caller about nine o'clock who
was to be shown right up to the li-
brary. The caller was a middle-aged

night in the country place, and come home the first thing in the
morning. He didn't want to worry Dr. Starbuck, who had
written him from China about having enemies. Mr. George
had showed me the letter. I've been in the family twenty-five
years, sir, ever since Mr. George's father bought this house."

When Drake asked him if he knew Mr. Witherspoon, the butler
said no. He had only remembered the name of the man Dr.
Starbuck was telephoning to last night because it was queer and
had "spoon" in it.

Chinese, in American clothes, and he spoke English perfectly. "A
gentleman Chinese, very refined." Dr. Starbuck had seemed very
pleased to see him, and they had gone into the library, where
Blodgett had brought them tea. They must have been talking
Chinese, he said, "a quick, sing-song language." The Chinese
gentleman had remained about an hour.

"What time yesterday afternoon was the attack on Mr. George
Starbuck in Yonkers?" Drake asked.

"About half-past five, so he said, sir," replied Blodgett.

Inspector Sorby had been standing by, listening. "Half-past five!" he echoed. "That would have given the Chinese plenty of time to come back to New York, call on Dr. Starbuck at nine o'clock, and make sure of the lay of the land. Then later—"

The butler gasped. His jaw dropped. "But, Mr. Inspector, you don't think that Chinese gentleman, so friendly, so genial—"

Sorby's chin went down in his collar. "I'll see for myself what the Chinese consul has to say. Maybe he knows such a man."

Drake laid a slender brown hand on the Inspector's arm.

"The Chinese know everything," he said, "but they don't talk."

Then he asked Sorby what he had done with Mr. Witherspoon.

"Sent him home. I didn't want another corpse on my hands."

He hasn't seen the dead man for thirty years. He was only a nuisance."

SUDDENLY Drake said: "No one must step a foot on that runway till I have gone over it. It hasn't rained for a week, you know. But first I want to search for some diaries which the loquacious Witherspoon said the old doctor had mentioned to him."

Drake then asked if anybody had telephoned Mr. George Starbuck at Yonkers that his uncle had been murdered.

"Oh, yes sir!" the butler spoke up. "I did. He's so lame he can hardly hobble, but he's coming by the first train. He screamed right into the telephone when I told him. He blames himself now for not warning his uncle last night about the Chinaman in Yonkers."

Drake pointed to a small leather trunk, which stood open in the corner by one of the windows. There were books and papers in it.

"Take one end of the trunk, Howard," he said to me; "we'll carry it into the library."

You may be sure I was glad to get out of that room where the murdered man lay on the bed. But at the door Drake turned:

"Sorby, when the medical examiner comes, I want that dagger."

We set down that small leather trunk near the window in the library; then my friend went over and closed the door into the hall.

"I must know more about that dead man," he said. There was repressed excitement in his voice.

He sat right down on the floor beside the open trunk, and I sat down beside him. On the top was a row of worn old notebooks—the diaries, of course. The first one was dated 1905. Drake laid it aside.

"I want very recent notes, and very old notes," he said, "the two periods thirty years apart. Good! Here is one dated 1895, the year he left America."

He opened the book, and I leaned over and read with him, skipping over the pages, reading here and there.

"1895. New York, July 18. Invitation from Madelon to visit her in the country near Syracuse. She says she'll feel easier with a doctor in the house, while John is in London. Baby expected in August. Sarah Biggs and her family soon coming out from Syracuse."

"July 20. Letter from Marshall, my missionary friend in Peking, suggesting I join him there. Good opening for young doctor. Must talk it over with John when he returns in October."

"July 25. Arrived at Madelon's. She went go to the hospital. Good local doctor here. Sarah not coming quite yet. Madelon and I alone here with the servants. Sensible girl, Madelon. Beautiful place here. Playing croquet with Mad. all aft. Driving all evening."

"Aug. 5. I'm a proud uncle. Madelon has a fine boy, 9½ lbs. May he grow up and be President! Local doctor looked in again this afternoon. Talked with him about China. He advises me to go. Says Madelon and young George doing nicely. Nephew squeezed my hand this evening. His eyes are precisely like his mother's, but he has John's forehead. He's a Starbuck all right, though his poor little nose is still only a sketch. Wish I had a wife like Madelon."

DEXTER DRAKE drew a sharp breath. It was ghastly, reading the youthful memoranda of that dead man of sixty in the next room, with a dagger through his heart! But we had to hurry on, skipping:

"Aug. 28. Letter from John. He's mad as a hornet. What's the man thinking of? Doesn't he know I'm a doctor of medicine—that Madelon invited me here? Poor old John! This comes of marrying a girl of twenty when you're forty. *Nota bene*—don't do the same, Ira. Go to China and marry an old Manchu princess."

"Oct. 2. Came to New York to meet John. Madelon and Sarah and families coming day after tomorrow."

"Oct. 3. Terrible interview with John. Though he paid for my medical education, that doesn't give him a license to insult me. I told him so, and he ordered me out of his presence. Am repacking my one trunk. I won't wait to see Mad. and young George tomorrow. Sent Mad. a long telegram telling her everything, and that I am off for China and shall never return to America."

"Oct. 4. (En route for San Francisco.) I've done it! I'm joining Marshall in Peking. Borrowed the money from Witherspoon."

"Oct. 5. Horror of horrors! Poor little Madelon! Dead! And little George saved! Have telegraphed John, asking him to wire me at San Francisco."

"Oct. 11. John wires he wants never to see or hear from me again!"

At that moment a sharp knock came on the library door.

Drake slipped the old diary into his brief-case, pulled down the lid of the trunk and went to the door. It was Inspector Sorby.

"Dr. Bancroft is here. If you want that dagger—"

I did not follow my friend into the bedroom—not for several minutes. I gave them time to remove the dagger. When I did go in there, Drake was arranging a screen between the bed and the door.

Then he took me and the butler downstairs. As we passed the open door of the drawing-room, my friend stopped. He had noticed a large portrait in oils over the mantel in there—a girl in a white dress.

"Is that Mrs. Madelon Starbuck?" he asked the butler.

"Yes sir. She was painted in her wedding dress."

Drake stood looking at the picture. Madelon seemed very real, after our reading about her in the dead man's diaries—poignantly real.

THE butler took us through a rear door into the back yard. After one glance at the ladder still leaning against the end of that runway, the detective made for the gate which led into the other street at the back, where a uniformed policeman was on guard.

The lock of that back gate had been forced with a chisel, Drake said. There was no street-lamp near the gate; the yard would be very obscure now, in the dark of the moon. The garage had just been repainted—that was how the ladder came to be lying about, the butler told us. There was no chauffeur. Mr. Starbuck drove his own car.

"This is a bachelor house now, sir, since Mrs. Biggs died."

"Mrs. Biggs?" Drake looked up.

"Yes sir, the late Mrs. Starbuck's sister, Mr. George's aunt Sarah, who brought him up. She died only six months ago."

Slowly, thoughtfully, the detective walked back toward the house. Of course that ladder would be covered with workmen's fingerprints, and we knew that the murderer had worn gloves. Drake let me come up the ladder, but told me not to step onto the runway.

I could see the tracks myself—large flat-footed tracks going in and out again. They showed plainly on the dust of the slates. Drake followed them right up to that open window of the death-room. When he came back to the end of the runway, he just stood there—gazing into space, his dark eyes clouded, troubled.

"Are they Chinese shoe-tracks?" I asked excitedly.

"Chinese felt-soled shoes would make precisely such tracks, Howard."

He followed me down the ladder. Then he turned to the butler. "Blodgett, have any Chinese been employed here?"

"Not in the house, sir. But we send our wash to the Chinese laundry on Eighth Avenue. The Chinese laundryman came only yesterday. The back gate is unlocked in the daytime. He comes to the kitchen door."

A shiver ran over me. And as we went into the house again, my friend clutched my arm:

"There's something awful in this case, Howard—it baffles me."

I was thinking of Dr. Starbuck's Chinese visitor last night.

When we returned to the second floor, we found two other strange men in the death-room—police photographers busy with their apparatus.

Drake wandered through the rooms at the back, then went up to the third floor, while I stood there alone at the head of the first flight of stairs. Looking down, I saw another strange man coming up, and wondered what his peculiar office was in this grisly post-mortem ritual of the police. (Continued on page 102)

The Way of Dionysia

by
Robert W.
Chambers

Realized in
Pictures by
George Wright



Dion
Wildwyck



John Vane



Mike
Blither



Dionysia



Pitt



Fox



Claire
Claverack

Synopsis:

DIONYSIA'S amazing career was perhaps decided when her mother died at her birth and left the child's upbringing to her actor father Dion Wildwyck. Her childhood was spent among one-night stands; and when she was ten and her father was taken ill, she went with him to a little place in Florida which he had purchased. Soon afterward he died, leaving Dionysia to the care of a poor family named Marmaduke.

She was bathing in the lagoon one day some years later when a launch put in from a yacht, and scarcely had she finished dressing when two men appeared at the door of her home—big Fred Fox, who was promoting a Beauty Show at Miami, and one Harry Pitt.

"Say, girlie," said Mr. Fox, "I lamped you through my glass, and it oughta be easy money for you in the Beauty Show I'm working up."

They urged her to sign with Mr. Fox and to enter the show as "Miss Everglades." For a long time Dionysia had longed for a brilliant stage career, and this seemed her Opportunity. She had neither clothes nor money, but Fred Fox offered to back her to the limit—and that afternoon Dionysia boarded his launch.

Fox and Pitt outfitted Dionysia and had her carefully groomed for the contest. But when the great Miami Beauty Show was judged, she was not even mentioned.

So Fox coolly dropped her as a failure, leaving her stranded in Miami. But Pitt got her a job as an extra in a film company, Mike Blither's Bathing Beauties, "on location" in the neighborhood. By turns she was a mermaid, a siren, a tarpon, a crayfish and a—girl.

Toward the end of the film Mike gave her a livery nag, rigged out as a sea-horse, to ride on. In the first rehearsal the swimming horse rolled over with her. Somebody dragged her out and rang up an ambulance; and the rehearsal continued. When Dionysia recovered, the Bathing Beauties had

departed, and her money was exhausted. Perforce she sought a job—and landed a place as a waitress in the hotel.

Presently Pitt appeared and took Dionysia motoring. It was that afternoon, while running blindly down the road to escape the over-ardent Pitt, that she literally collided with her fate and John Vane, a young man on vacation.

To Dionysia, Vane seemed all that was desirable. And when he boarded the train for New York, there too was Dionysia, bound to seek theatrical fortune in New York.

All the berths were taken, but Vane gave up the lower berth of his section to Dionysia—with the result that gossips carried a malicious version of the story to his fiancée Claire Claverack, and she broke their engagement.

And now more trouble came to Vane, for his real-estate ventures turned out badly, and he found himself facing bankruptcy. Dionysia, however, progressed to a stock company, and presently she was chosen to create the part of Dionysia in a new play by a famous writer.

One January day Vane walked into Dionysia on Fifth Avenue. She caught him by both hands. "Oh, my dear, my dear," she repeated, "we've nearly got each other! You haven't married anybody else, have you?"

He shook his head, smiling, for she was very lovely. (Now turn the page and read on:)



AT every opportunity during the rehearsals of the play "Dionysia," Dionysia herself came to Vane's small apartment without any indication of embarrassment.

"It doesn't matter," she explained over the teacups; "we know we're all right. And anyway, you're pretty sure to fall in love with me, aren't you?"

Vane explained to her he was in no financial condition to fall in love with anybody at all, but Dionysia only laughed at him.

Every day he read publicity puffs about Stanley Fer-

rass and his new play, and about Dionysia Wildwyck and her beauty and talent.

Their portraits, moreover, were continually plastered all over the daily press.

From the financial quicksands of Westchester which slowly were engulfing him, John Vane gazed upon Dionysia's portraits and, nearly every day, upon the girl herself.

He didn't wish to be in love. He didn't want to go into bankruptcy.

Both seemed certain.



THE long-developing bud of the Florida boom now burst into magnificent florescence. Too late for Vane, however. For he hadn't a dollar with which to operate; and his obligations held him in the Westchester quicksands.

Now despite Vane's rather brutal remark to her several years since, Dionysia had much sense, both common and uncommon. After she had read about herself in the newspapers, she read other news.

And one day, at rehearsal, she telephoned Vane to drop everything and come to the theater instantly.

"My dear," she cried excitedly, "I have read in the papers that they're all crazy in Florida. And while they are, I think you had better sell them Wildwyck Towers. Don't you?"

He gazed at her grimly.

"Once," he said, "I told you you were a fool, and I offered to send you back to your oranges. Now you're sending me there. Why not add that I'm a blithering fool?"

She gave him a happy look. "You know why," she said almost bashfully.



THE curtain fell on the first performance of "Dionysia" amid scenes that have seldom been paralleled in a New York theater.

Dionysia Wildwyck had won her place on the map—and just at the time when John Vane had been nearly wiped off from it.

After the performance he went around to her dressing-room. And for an hour he waited for the crowd there to thin out and let him in.

When finally he made his way inside, she saw him in-

stantly and ran to him—she who had run to him under such different circumstances at their first meeting—with her arms full of Dionysian roses.

He tried to speak.

"I know," she said breathlessly, "and thank you. But, oh my dear, my dear! I've got you—haven't I?"

He lifted her hand and touched it with his lips.

"I'm leaving for Florida at midnight," he said. "You will unquestionably make a great deal of money out of your orange grove."



VANE had been away a month before Dionysia heard from him. The day he sold Dionysia's property fronting lagoon and ocean, acre by acre, was a memorable day in Florida. He sold the property in lots on the premises at auction, amid scenes of wildest excitement, where thousands of frantic men and women were fighting for a chance to bid.

His telegraphic report to Dionysia said: "Cleared a million and a quarter in cash for the thousand acres at Wildwyck Towers."

She telegraphed: "Thanks for the million, but oh, my dear, have I got you too? Wire reply."

He wired: "Am operating on my own account on a shoestring. Am on both feet again. Do you want me?"

"Yes," she telegraphed, "and both feet. Also the rest of you. Why do you think I've been behaving myself for the last three years?"

He replied: "All right. But I'd better remain here for the present, considering the opportunities. May I, dear?"

"No," she wired. "Come home instantly."



SO Vane cleaned up his many transactions as soon as was possible, got aboard a train and telegraphed her veiled foolishness at every opportunity on his way North; and Dionysia continued to reply to him in her ardent, unfeigned English.

She was at the Pennsylvania Station when his train rolled in, and fought her way to him and put both arms around his neck.

"I've got you," she said passionately. "I've got everything now. . . . Almost, that is."

"What else?" the enraptured Vane promptly demanded, laughing at her.

"I'll tell you after we are married," she said to him happily. "Do you think, John, that it would really be considered very bad taste if we were to kiss each other right here?"

And so it came about that John Vane and Dionysia Wildwyck, who had met so unconventionally and whose acquaintance had progressed so curiously, exchanged their first kiss in the Pennsylvania Station.



ONCE Vane had given Dionysia a Christmas gift, and she owed him one. After they were married, she told him what it would be.

"But, my darling," he laughed, "you never can tell—"

"Yes, I can," she said.

Now Dionysia had become as efficient as she was charming. And so, according to plan, John Vane received from her the following year an amazing present—toothless, hairless, but alluring.

"Dearest," said Dionysia, "I'll give you another, and then we'll resume my career. . . . That is, if you approve?"

"I approve of everything that you are and of everything that you do, darling Dionysia," replied that infatuated man at once.

Meanwhile the World wagged its head and deplored the fact that Dionysia Wildwyck had ventured to marry anybody at all—particularly, of course, a mere everyday, unromantic operator in real-estate.

THE END

The Vanished Passenger

By
William
McFee

Illustrated by
Dudley Gloyne
Summers



"Dearie," says this girl to Annie, "I got to get a cab to take me home quick."

YES, this is almost the only time I get a breath of fresh air. (The stewardess was speaking.) They don't mind my sitting here, either. Gives the Palm Court a homelike air, they think, to have a stewardess in one of the rockers, doing a little mending. It's out of the wind anyhow, and you've no idea how a girl craves to sit down. This standing in uniform around the entrance hall is enough to make a human being quit the game altogether.

Oh, yes, of course we have queer passengers from time to time. . . . What's that you say? Well, you can't ever tell. There was two girls last trip. The Chief,—he's a friend of mine; I often go up and spend the evening with him and his wife in Harlem when we're in port,—he simply wouldn't believe me when I told him they were cheap skates. It came out they'd won a prize for getting the largest number of new subscribers for the paper in their town. The prize was a trip on our cruises. Six Weeks of Bliss on the Bounding Blue—you know how they write. They were in one of my rooms. You wouldn't believe me if I told you! Doing their washing in the basin, and sticking their handkerchiefs on the wardrobe mirror to dry them, and hanging underwear all about! Cigarette holes burnt in the sheets! And as for getting any money out of them—humph! One of them came to me to press a skirt, and I did it. It's my work—but not for nothing. Would you believe, they broke their fan and when the electrician came to fix it, they vamped him

into putting a connection on the wall that would fit their cheap little electric iron? Yes, that was their line! Up on the promenade deck or in the smoking-room they looked like a million dollars, and all the men were round them like flies round honey. Men do make me sick sometimes, and that's a fact. I see the nicest girls left as though they had some contagious disease, while a brazen pug-nosed little rip will be asking the men to stand

back so she can get some air. . . .

I knew you'd ask that! Passengers like you always do. I expect it nowadays. I get scared sometimes when you people say I'm so refined, and how did I ever come to take up a job like this? Because it makes me feel inefficient. I try to use language that's not quite refined sometimes, just to show I'm hard-boiled. Yes, I suppose it does go deeper than mere words. I can't say I'm crazy to be considered ladylike, you know. When all's said and done, a woman does this sort of thing for what there is in it. It's a profession, and when you get in the way of it, there are worse ways of earning a living. . . . What's that you say? See the world? I don't see so much of it. I very often never set foot on a dock except at the end of the voyage on South Street. I can tell you I've never had any good reasons for sight-seeing in foreign parts. . . .

Yes, I know. You want me to tell you how I came to take up with ships. Well, if you'll leave me work round to it in my own way, you'll find out. Seeing it's you, madam, I don't mind. We were talking about the queer folks we have on board. Queer things happen too, as I could tell of, only the Company naturally don't want them to get about. Don't expect me to talk scandal, please. . . . What? Those girls last trip? That isn't scandal.

The Company don't want their custom, I can tell you. I mean unfortunate events. They jinx a ship in no time at all. We had a hophead who went in for somnambulism, on the side, one voyage. She scared me stiff. Fancy coming along the passage past all those closed doors in the early morning, before daylight, with only the pilot lights showing up the shadows, and bumping into a big, white-faced woman in a cerise-colored *peignoir*, walking in her sleep! The deck-steward, who had to look after her when she was sitting in her chair on the promenade, told us he was losing his mind. When she wasn't staring at the horizon, she was trying to bribe him with a fifty-dollar bill to bring her a bottle of brandy and a tumbler. The nurse who was with her had warned him it was as good as murder to give her alcohol, and Jimmy has a conscience, anyway. It was clever of us to get that woman ashore in Havana without the other passengers thinking she was more than just strange. Only one slip. The Captain was standing at the gangway, as usual, shaking hands with them, and when she came by, he offered to do the same by her. And she tried to push past him so sudden he nearly fell into the dock. But in the excitement only one or two of us noticed what was happening. Poor thing, she died down there. We brought the coffin up two voyages later. . . .

No, I'm not dodging the question at all. I have to explain to you how life on a ship is a very different thing if you look at it from my end of the alleyway. It's like the Chief says: With you it's the voyage; with us it's only one voyage out of fifty, the day's work. The Chief told me once he met a man in a theater

lobby uptown. "Don't you remember me?" this bird says. "I was a passenger on your ship a couple of years ago. I remember you." You see? The Chief couldn't remember for the life of him. It's the same with other things. And besides, we have our own lives to live, ashore. No, I'm not married yet. I live with my cousin and her three, in Newark, New Jersey. . . . Oh, well, maybe.

Well, if extraordinary things are what you are anxious to hear about, I can tell you of one case that never was cleared up. It was my first trip, too. A girl, about twenty, came on board past the assistant purser, bound for Cartagena in South America, and the baggage-master had her one trunk put in her room, Number Seventeen, B Deck, without bath, according to the check from her ticket. She had a suitcase in her hand which she held onto as far as anybody remembered. The bell-hop denied he had refused to carry it for her, and he told the truth—for the only time in his life, I fancy. She walked through the entrance-hall, down the stairs to B Deck—and she was never seen again. She simply vanished from human sight. Yes, of course I know the story. I'm telling it.

Of course, mind you, it takes time to locate a disappearance like that. She'd been ticked off on the purser's list; her trunk was in her room, and the second steward was writing her name on a pink ticket for Table C, where he always put unaccompanied ladies. I don't know why, unless it's because there was a draft in that corner, and he knew they wouldn't kick. Officially she was on the ship, and passengers are always anywhere but in their

cabins during the first excitement of getting away. They go up on the boat-deck and fall over the air-blowers, or try to reach the bridge unless the master-at-arms heads them off. They'd climb the funnel, if they knew how to reach the little iron ladder, to the whistle. Sometimes they want a bath at once, and you can't blame them if they've just arrived from Texas or Wisconsin.

Anyway, this girl wasn't missed for hours. She didn't come to dinner, but nobody was going to pester a girl to eat if she wanted to lie down. There were about three hundred passengers on board. The only person who could be expected to make an official report was the stewardess for B Deck. That was myself. And for reasons best known to myself at the time, I never said a word. I knew, you see, the girl's story. I had a very good chance to know it.

Her name was Annie, and she was married when she was eighteen to a young chap named Pynzen. Not that it matters, because he had to change it when he ran away to South America. On the ship she was listed under that name: Mrs. Oscar Pynzen, housewife, of Rivereto, New Jersey. And it

was a girl of that name who disappeared as completely as though she had climbed through the porthole and dived into the Atlantic Ocean.

She was married about two years before this trip, and her husband worked in New York, commuting from the Jersey side. He was something in the clothing trade. As far as she could make out, he was shipping-clerk in a furrier's house on Twenty-third Street. The fact is, he was not communicative about what he did. They lived with his folks, and the old people were of the quietly bullying kind, if you know what I mean. Their son was their white-headed boy, and in their opinion might have married much better than this Annie. Annie, according to them, had no spirit and didn't know much. Annie's folks were from New England and had not been very successful in life.



And then the steward and the purser want to know if I've seen a Mrs. Pynzen, Number Seventeen B.

And then the girl, she hears us, and comes out. When she saw us, she screamed.



She and their Oscar had become suddenly infatuated. It was one of those affairs that flare up like a fire when you pour kerosene on it, and then go black out. And Annie had no clear notion what had happened to her. The old people made it their business to explain that Annie was not a loving wife. Annie was getting the meals, making the beds and cleaning the house for the four of them for her board and lodging. Young Pynzen never had any money.

Young Pynzen, indeed, was a sport. Annie, when she got away from him, was able to see it wasn't his fault. He had been a spoiled only child and had been babied. He never would have amounted to much perhaps, but as it was, he was simply a useless encumbrance. But how was she to know? He was the only man of her acquaintance.

She didn't understand him. It was all very well for the old people to nag her for not being a loving wife, but she knew that was not the trouble. She just didn't understand him. He had a

streak of pirate blood in him, you might say. He ought to have lived in buccaneer days. He used to take Annie to Palisades Park and go on the switch-back, and then, as the thing plunged down as though it was going smash into eternity, he'd grab Annie, who was simply rigid with fright, and kiss her so hard he'd make her mouth bleed. She couldn't respond to these moods of his, and then he would grow angry and dumb. There was something that he wanted, but Annie didn't know what it was, let alone have it to give.

Things went on like that for about eighteen months and then Master Pynzen disappeared. His firm went to the police with a tale that he had assisted in a robbery of a hundred thousand dollars' worth of furs. He had consigned the goods, and they had been shipped and never seen again. Neither was he. After the noise died down and the men who actually stole the things were caught, the old people got a letter from Cartagena in South America, from Oscar. He was broke, and begged them to send



him a few hundred dollars, to enable him to get a start in business. He had been let down by the people he had worked for in that fur deal.

Respectable well-to-do people like you wont understand how the old Pynzen folks believed their boy and blamed Annie for not keeping him back from a life of disgrace. Yes, they blamed that girl! And when the letter came, they sent him all they could get together, about a thousand dollars. Then they decided that Annie ought to go to him and keep house for him in that foreign country where he was. They wrote that Annie was coming.

Annie didn't know what to do at first. She had a strong sense of duty, but she was certain sure as death that not only Oscar didn't want her, but that he couldn't support her down there. She didn't love him any more. Love can't stand the sort of life the Pynzens were in the habit of leading Annie. She seemed to herself to be stunned, as far as her affections were concerned.

swung open and a girl about her own age came rushing out. She had a suitcase in one hand and a letter in the other, and at the minute she saw every cab in New York coming into the dock and not one in sight wanting a fare, she looked up and caught Annie's eyes on her. She smiled, and standing on the step, put her head inside. Annie saw she was in a state of excitement about something.

"Dearie," this girl says to Annie, "I gotta get a cab to take me home quick. Lemme get in with you till you've paid him off, will you—there's a dear." And she opened the door and got in beside Annie.

"What's the matter?" asked Annie. She had no idea of what was in the girl's mind.

"I can't do it!" says the girl. "I just had a wire and my business wont wait. Mr. Spicer can think what he likes."

"Who's he?" asks Annie. "Have you been fired?"

"Fired? No!" says the girl. "It's (Continued on page 108)

She couldn't organize herself to make any resistance. She was carried along. The old people were strong characters. They acted according to their lights. In a way, they were right in sending their son's wife to help him in such circumstances. But their son's wife didn't want to go. She knew he was only a broken reed. The idea of being cast away in that South American country, alone, not knowing the language, and perhaps no money, was like a nightmare to the girl. It paralyzed her faculties. She went toward it as if she was in a trance. And you've got to remember that if she didn't do as they said, they could turn her into the street.

Perhaps it was the excitement which brought on old Mr. Pynzen's illness. On the day of sailing he was laid up, and his wife couldn't leave him. They were a truly devoted couple, I'll say that for them. Annie had to go by herself. She had a taxi all the way so she wouldn't get lost. And she arrived at the pier behind a string of other cabs with passengers for the same ship. It was as sure as anything can be in this world, that Annie would go to Cartagena, wherever that might be. She wasn't good at geography, and the name meant nothing to her, you must remember.

She was very frightened. The taxi moved up to the archway, and she had the notion it was the entrance to a prison. She could see policemen and men in strange uniforms standing about, and just beside her a flight of steps leading up into an office. She had the idea of jumping out and running into this office as a way of escaping from the terrors of going on a ship. She had never seen one, you know, except in the illustrated sections of the Sunday newspapers. She was looking at that office and deciding the taxi-man would be sure to take after her for his fare, when the door

The Renaming of Quit

By
Samuel
Scoville, Jr.

Illustrated by
Charles Livingston Bull



MR. SCOVILLE has received many letters from South African readers of his tales in this magazine—letters that bring him high compliments for his accuracy in presenting the traits of the animals of that vast animal paradise.

Indeed the only word of criticism he has received has been of his spelling of the Dutch word, "veldt;" they tell him that he should call it "veld."

BACK in the bad old days when black instead of white ruled South Africa bloodily, Cetewayo, that great Zulu king, sent twelve of his best hunters to the Addo Bush to bring back the heart of a bull elephant.

The reason of his desire was simple and conclusive. In the last analysis, the elephant is the ruler of the jungle. Lions may pose as kings. A monster python may lord it for a time over the lesser breeds. The rhinoceros, white or black, may persuade himself that no other creature can stand against the rush of his armored bulk. Yet when an old bull elephant, twelve feet high at the shoulder, with the brain of a man, tusks eleven feet long, a trunk which can grip like a vise or flail triphammer blows, forefeet like pile-drivers, and a weight and strength handed down from a lost world of monsters—when the elephant chooses to assert his kingship, there is no beast on earth that can withstand his claim. Moreover, with any luck, an elephant lives one hundred years. Wherefore the man who eats the heart of that jungle king will inherit his might and length of days. So reasoned Cetewayo, and there was none to dispute his logic.

From dawn nearly to the dark of a long day his hunters traveled until they reached the edge of that dark and bloody ground the Addo Bush, which many a man before them had entered never to return. That night they sacrificed to the setting moon and cast the Lots of Lamba, that black goddess of the jungle, whose name no man may pronounce after dark. Twice, and thrice, the stained and twisted bones fell in front of the squat image of the dreadful deity, and always among the reds and blues and tawny yellows of the other symbols, Nikana, the Black Mamba, topped them all. As for the last time the lots fell the same, Nijan, the oldest hunter, sighed.

"One of us, O Brothers, will stay in the Bush tomorrow," he said. "Let us eat and sleep, that we may be strong to meet what the gods may send."

Just before dawn the twelve slipped snakily through the scrub

and then spread out like a pack of hunting dogs. Their bodies, naked save for the girdles of leopard-tails which only proven hunters may wear among the Zulus, were washed with a decoction of camphor and African myrrh, for though the elephant-people are slow of sight and hard of hearing, no beast that lives can catch the scent of man quicker than they.

Where the bush sloped up into a line of little hills, six-foot gladioli gleamed blood-red, here and there, against shadowy tree-ferns, while the close-growing bamboos hedged either side of the trail like smooth steel bars. Farther on great branches had been torn down, and large trees had been uprooted and overturned; everywhere deep round holes in the soft ground showed where the elephant herd had stood while feeding.

Through the dim silences of the jungle the hunters glided like ghosts. Now and then one of them would slip up a tree and stare across the waving boughs, but each time there was no sight or sound of the great beasts they hunted.

Beyond the hills the forest gave way to the bush proper, a green sea of low trees, and riddled with the trails of elephants, rhinoceros and water-buffalo.

At last, at a signal from Nijan, the little band halted in the shade of an old fig-tree wreathed in a mist of gray moss, and on whose gnarled limbs orchids white and crimson and gold gleamed like jewels.

"There is a herd close at hand—I feel them," whispered the old hunter as they grouped themselves about him. "Let every man be ready, for they will charge on sight."

Again they moved like phantoms among the low trees, in that silence which hunters only acquire in a lifetime afield. Once they passed a deep pool fringed with white water-lilies and saw the sun mirrored in the still water from which game trails radiated in all directions like the spokes of a wheel. Just beyond the water-hole the close-set stems of a patch of lantana bush barred their way. Suddenly from its depths a whydah, with yellow breast and white tail-feathers, crowed like a cock, and Nijan held up a warning hand. Even as he did so, out of the bushes burst a black-maned lion. Instantly there sounded just



What had seemed only a despised coach-dog acted like a camouflaged lion.

behind him, from a little glade fringed with brush, a shrill angry trumpeting, and a black wave of charging cow-elephants rushed from the thicket—for in an elephant herd it is always the cows which first charge an approaching enemy. The matted mass of tough creepers snapped like packthread before them, while the lion, flinging aside all his dignity and looking like a huge yellow cat, ran for his life.

A charging lion for about two hundred yards is one of the fastest of all animals, and within that distance can run down a horse or an antelope. Only the cheetah, or hunting leopard, the swiftest sprinter on earth, can equal him among the cats. Moreover that particular lion, unlike the fox in the fable, was running for his life and not for his dinner. Yet the dark bulks of the charging cows crashing through the bush, and moving clumsily across the plain on their enormous feet nearly two yards in circumference, drifted toward the fugitive with such effortless speed that he only just gained the refuge of the opposite thicket before they were upon him. Creeping beneath the thorn-studded vines on his belly, he escaped before the elephants could locate his hiding-place.

Failing to find him, the enraged cows tore up the trees and flattened the thicket, and by the time they had finished their feminine display of temper, the place looked as if a cyclone had passed over it.

As some of the hunters, inexperienced in elephant ways, started to move toward the herd, the old leader restrained them.

"Wait," he whispered. "Comes now the chief."

Even as he spoke, a trumpet sounded from the depths of the thicket where the herd had been feeding. Unlike the high-pitched voices of the cows, this call was a booming note, deep and heavy, as if it came from underground. Then the close-set steely stems of the lantana scrub burst apart, and into the open strode such a beast as even Nijan in all of his fifty years of hunting had never before beheld. Twelve feet high at his mighty shoulders, he seemed

to stand before them like some monster from another world. His skin was a rough slate-color, sparsely covered with tiny black bristles, and his enormous trunk, with its gripping finger at the tip, writhed in the air like a thick black snake. Each of his tremendous front feet had four toes, and on his left forefoot one of the toes had grown so long that it showed plainly beyond the rim of his vast foot, the peculiarity which in after years gave him his name of "Long-toe."

As the beast stood facing the returning cows, old Nijan, taking advantage of every bush and tree and patch of fern, crept up to within a few yards of where he stood. Then, cocking his old-fashioned musket, he aimed carefully, not at the elephant's head, but at the knee-pan of his foreleg. He knew, what many a white hunter has learned too late, that the brain of an elephant is so well guarded by masses of jutting, sloping bone that it is hard indeed to penetrate it with a rifle-bullet, but that if one of his legs be broken, he must stand still, since the other three are not enough to support his huge bulk in motion.

Nijan pulled the trigger—but instead of a report, there sounded only a dull click as the cartridge, one of a damaged lot which a rascally trader had sold the tribe, failed to explode. At the sound, the elephant's flapping ears came forward, and raising his trunk high over his head, he sniffed the air suspiciously. Although he could not scent the man, Nijan was so close that even the near-sighted eyes of the great beast could make him out.

Drawing back his sensitive trunk, as an African elephant always does when about to charge, with an appalling bellow of rage the king of the herd rushed straight at the old hunter. Dropping his useless gun, Nijan drew from his leopard-skin girdle the short razor-edged stabbing spear which he carried as an extra weapon, and hurled it desperately at the knee of one of the great legs which drove back and forth like piston-rods. His aim was true, but a swinging vine deflected the long blade just enough to make it miss its mark. As the monster reached him, the old hunter

plunged desperately into the thicket at the side of the trail. At that point, however, the path was fringed with the supple stems of the close-set lantana scrub; they threw him back as if he had dashed himself against a steel-wire fence, and in another second his life passed out under the feet of the charging monster, while the rest of the band fled from the haunted Bush never to return.

THE years went by, and Cetewayo went the way of all flesh. Before that happened, Long-toe's herd had deserted him, as often happens when an elephant kills a man.

When, seventy-five years later, Squire Weston moved to South Africa from Devonshire and bought a plantation bordering on the Addo Bush, old Long-toe was still there, well over a century old, the most dangerous rogue elephant at large in Africa. Indeed, one reason the Squire had been able to buy his holdings at a bargain was on account of Long-toe's presence. With the lapse of years the old elephant had become as crafty as he was fierce. Taking refuge in the most impenetrable parts of the bush during the day, he fed only at night and avoided all the traps and nets and set-guns laid for him by the most skillful hunters. Always he was an ever-present menace to the farmers whose lands bordered the seventy-five square miles of the Addo Bush, and men or cattle who strayed there often never came back.

The Squire, however, discounted and doubted the stories of the elephant's cunning and ferocity, and arrived from England prepared to lead the same life in South Africa that he had in Devonshire. A part of his penates were two dogs, the thoroughbred white British bull terrier Grit, and Quit, a coach-dog, as those black-dotted, straight-legged pointers from Dalmatia have been christened. Coach-dogs are all a timorous folk, but Quit held the clan-record for fear. Cats, rats, dogs, snakes, guns, thunder—he was afraid of more things than there were blotches on his snowy skin; hence his name.

In Africa, as in England, his duty, as he saw it, was to follow his master wherever he went, and especially to trot under the Squire's high trap whenever he drove out, with tail up and head down, as close to the horses' flying hoofs as possible. When it came to bickerings with other dogs or encounters with striped musihonds, which yell like devils and bite early and often; with cane-rats big as rabbits; or meercats, which have sharp teeth and move like a flicker of heat-lightning—Quit's motto was peace at any price. The dogs of Pinetown soon learned that he was too proud to fight, and when for the third time they drove him yelping into the shop where the Squire was buying supplies, the latter decided that though a leopard cannot change his spots, a bull terrier can. Wherefore, the next day, with a bit of charcoal he did a fair imitation of Quit's polka-dot pattern on Grit's pinky-white skin. Then, tying up the coach-dog, who protested piteously, the Squire drove slowly to Pinetown with Grit trotting beneath the trap playing all unconsciously Quit's part. The mongrels greeted the familiar black-and-white livery with barks and yelps of delight. From far and near they gathered with prancing and curvettings, each one highly resolved to have at least one bite from that craven, spotted foreign dog. In order to give them a free field the Squire entered the nearest shop; and the door had no more than closed behind him when the pariah pack rushed at the astonished Grit. When it dawned upon that high-g geared fighting-machine dozing in the shade of the cart that those half-and-quarter-breeds were about to attack him—Grit, the son of Nip, the grandson of Death and the great-grandson of Battling Slasher himself, his deep-set eyes in their triangular sockets took on the red gleam of his breed.

A gangling yellow hound was the first to dive under the wagon. Curving himself like a bent bow, the terrier slipped the other's lead and countered with a slash from his daggerlike teeth that caused the hound to retire from the field precipitately. Then he sprang out to meet in the open the crowd of assorted dogs which came running down upon him. Trained by many battles, Grit had worked out a system of fighting which had never yet failed him, and he met the amateurish tactics of his assailants with all the deadly precision and confidence which a champion boxer might show against a gang of mixed-ale fighters. Ten to one they closed in on him, barking, growling and snarling, while he fought in a deadly silence. Like a black-and-white battering-ram, he drove against a mongrel mastiff who towered over him in the van of the attack. Catching him in mid-stride, Grit bowled him over, ripped his teeth through him like a crosscut saw, dodged under the snap of the next dog, splintered a foreleg with one crunch of his steel jaws, and springing, crouching and side-stepping, slashed his way unscathed through the ranks of his foes.

In an instant the mongrel mob realized that they had made a terrible mistake. What had seemed to be only a despised coach-dog acted like a camouflaged lion. Dog after dog was ripped and gashed and trampled underfoot until finally the circle broke, and the whole crowd, tails between their legs, fled limping and yelping down the village street. From that day the real Quit conveyed his master and the trap through the streets of Pinetown; nor did ever a dog so much as wag his tongue against him. The mere sight of black spots *couchant* and a white tail *rampant* was sufficient to make the fiercest fighter suddenly remember that he had a pressing engagement elsewhere.

For several months after the Squire had taken possession of his plantation there was no sign of Long-toe and he was more than ever convinced that the stories of his haunting the Bush were native legends not worthy of belief.

Then there came a day when one of his best oxen broke out of pasture and wandered away. The native herdsman trailed it to the very edge of the Bush, but not a foot farther would he venture. It was in vain that the Squire ordered one man after another to go in after the missing beast. Neither orders, persuasions nor even bribes availed.

"One goes in but one does not come out," observed Bazutos, the oldest of the Kafir herdsman. Finally with the rashness of ignorance the Squire decided to hunt for the lost ox himself. Unfortunately for him, there were no other white men on the plantation that day to advise against such an action. The overseer, a hard-bitten, experienced old Scotchman, had gone to Pinetown for supplies, and his assistant was in the Port Elizabeth hospital with an attack of black-water fever. Wherefore it happened that daybreak found the Squire, armed only with a shotgun, following the narrow trail which led through the strip of jungle that fringed the bush proper. With him went Grit, greatly interested in this unfamiliar territory, while Quit also insisted upon going, although he hesitated and whined protestingly as they reached the edge of the Bush. Behind the three, as they entered the jungle, the newly risen sun drenched the ashen thorn-scrub with that liquid amber-gold which is the color of Africa. The trail of the lost ox showed black against the silver of the dewy grasses as the trio penetrated deeper and deeper into the sinister shade. Here and there showed spikes of aloe, tall euphorbias and the flat-topped acacias on which the giraffes feed, while spears of wild sial stood up like sharpened stakes among patches of gray, impenetrable thorn-scrub.

For an hour the dogs and man followed the trail until it ended in a trampled circle fifty feet across, filled with round, deep holes. From the farther edge of the circle Quit, who had pressed on ahead, came hurrying back with his tail between his legs. There the Squire found the carcass of the lost ox, a shapeless mass of trampled flesh. As he stared down at that ghastly proof of the stories about Long-toe, the monster who haunted the Addo Bush, suddenly a gaunt, gray-black mountain of an animal drifted into the open not thirty feet away. For an instant the man and the monster faced each other. Then, pricking up his ears and hoisting his short tail, with that ripping, snorting bellow with which an elephant warns of killing, the grim bull charged.

NO one had ever questioned Squire Weston's courage. In his younger days he had shot tigers on foot in the sal jungles of India, and since he had been in Africa he had already faced and killed a charging lion. That day, however, the sight of the vast bulk of the elephant rushing down upon him gave him the same sense of helpless terror as if he were facing an avalanche or a tornado. Hurling his useless gun to one side, he wriggled like a snake beneath a patch of mimosa scrub bristling with ten-inch thorns, white as bleached bone and sharp as needles. Just as he came to the center of that guarded circle, the elephant reached its circumference, and tried by main strength to thrust his way through the daggered steel-strong boughs. Failing in his first attack, the crafty, ferocious brute circled the thicket trying again and again to find some opening through which he might thrust his long trunk and drag the man out to his death, but only succeeded in being pricked by the long thorns.

Grit took one look at the mountain of flesh which had suddenly loomed up before him as he stood in the lee of the thicket where his master had taken refuge, and suddenly deciding that fighting elephants was no part of his duties, turned deliberately around and trotted off down the back-trail toward home.

For a long moment the great beast stared with dreadful intentness at the man, and his swinish little eyes burned red with the lust of slaughter. Then, turning around, he deliberately backed into the thorn-studded scrub with his enormous hindquarters and



He whirled frantically, striving to strike or seize the elusive dog with his trunk.

sat down, flattening part of the thicket and nearly impaling the man on the long, keen thorns. As Long-toe was scrambling to his feet preparatory to repeating the attack, an ally of the Squire appeared upon the field.

At the first outbreak of hostilities Quit had retreated to the rear with exceeding promptness, whining with fear—but had not gone home. When Grit retreated, the coach-dog whined still more loudly, but still he stayed. Then, when the elephant began to sit his way through the thicket, it was not Grit the fighter who intervened, but Quit the coward. Whimpering and trembling with terror, he snapped and worried at the elephant's feet, sensitive as they were large, until with a scream of rage, the great bull suddenly turned and charged him. As the dog, yelping with fear, fled, the Squire slipped out from the far side of the thicket and ran for his life down one of the winding trails which led out of the Bush.

Unfortunately for the Squire, Quit soon managed to hide himself in a clump of acacia thorn. Losing sight of him, the maddened elephant rushed back to take vengeance on the enemy he had left behind and, finding him gone, followed him by scent like a hound. In a minute the fugitive heard the muffled *pad-pad* of great feet coming nearer and nearer, and the crash of a great body through the brush until the black bulk of the elephant burst into the open a scant two hundred yards behind him. At the sight Squire Weston halted, and as a last resort, hurriedly lighted the long dry grass in several places. Instantly the wind, blowing toward his pursuer, fanned the blaze into a wavering semicircle of flame.

Against any other beast of the jungle fire would have proved a sure defense, but the elephant has a brain second only to that of man himself. That one rushed along the trail and attacked the flames furiously, stamping them out with his huge feet until in less than a minute only a ring of (Continued on page 100)

The Old Home Town

By Rupert Hughes

Illustrated by
Will Foster

ON one of Hollywood's loveliest boulevards stands the newest and most captivating of that famous town's famous homes. It is Persian in its aspect; and its patio, unseen from without, of course, is enchanting. And all about it are—not the palms and pepper and eucalyptus trees that greet the eye wherever else one looks in Hollywood, but birches, brought from Oregon for the owner, Rupert Hughes.

The Story So Far:

BEN WEBB'S mother had long been widowed by the murder of his father, an attorney, and ever since, he had been the mainstay of the family. And all these years Ben was working as a mechanic in the Mississippi River town of Carthage, he had worshiped Odalea Lail, who had been a flower-girl at a wedding he'd attended the day his father was shot. One day Ben was called to mend the run-down Lail furnace, and while seeking to make life more comfortable for his adored Odalea, he hit upon a device for automatic water-heating that seemed likely to win him fortune. Odalea rewarded his successful experiment in her own house by going buggy-riding with him. And when after a picnic supper at sunset, Ben took her in his arms and kissed her, she did not protest.

Yet on the homeward drive they each began to realize the obstacles: Odalea the horror of her family at a match with the lowly plumber; Ben the duty he owed to his widowed mother and to the younger children—how could he support two households? And when they reached home, each encountered lively demonstrations of the situation—Odalea a mother and father and her dominant aunt Mrs. Budlong, the social arbiter of Carthage, sitting up wrathfully to greet her.

For two great pieces of news had come to Carthage that day: the railroad was to build its shop there and send in many workmen, along with an office force of attractive young Easterners; and the dam across the river, which with its power-plant had long been the hope of the town (especially of Odalea's father, who had plunged in real estate), again promised to become a fact.

For once, some measure of realization followed close on prophecy: the shops were built; the Easterners came; the town boomed. Ben was almost too busy earning money—to send his younger brother Guido to college, and to procure training for his sister Petunia's wonderful voice—to mourn the Odalea he had felt in duty bound to forsake. And Odalea was almost too much taken up with the attentions of Mr. Blecker of New York, to weep for Ben. Yet the railroad shops and the young Easterners departed almost as suddenly as they had come: a Napoleon of finance had gobbled the road and moved its shops.

A time of doldrums followed for Carthage and for Odalea—for young Blecker was one of the first to go, and he did not come

back again. And then at last action began on the dam in earnest and brought a new group of interesting strangers to Carthage. Chief among them was Ian Craigie, the great engineer; a lucky chance made him acquainted with Ben Webb and his mechanical talents; and the upshot of the matter was a real chance for Ben with a job on the dam under Craigie.

To Odalea the coming of the dam brought a new twist of fortune in the form of new suitors—first an attractive young man named Tom Merrick, who was so possessed by a demon of jealousy that she was obliged to get rid of him; then Hunter Parrish, a giant of an engineer, whom good Mrs. Webb had taken into her house because he could find no other place in the crowded little town. He was calling at Odalea's house the night the ice went out on the river, and all the workers on the dam were summoned post-haste to its defense.

The battle against the battering ice was desperate; in the course of it Ben Webb dragged Merrick and Parrish out of the water when the ice broke under them. But the dam held—at least until the fresh menace of the flood that would follow.

Shortly afterward Parrish took Odalea for a motor-ride one evening, and a concatenation of mishaps delayed their return till five in the morning. Odalea found her scandalized parents waiting up for her.

"Tomorrow morning first thing," said her mother, "you got to nounce your engagement, or your father will have to horsewhip Hunter Parrish and your aunt will get Mr. Craigie to discharge him."

"All right," replied Odalea sleepily. "I'll say I am engaged, then. I'd say anything to get to bed."

And presently she found this weary speech had betrayed her indeed, for Mrs. Budlong invited her to a party—and announced her engagement to Parrish. Amusement kept Odalea from denial until too late. And Ben Webb, who had escorted Odalea to Mrs. Budlong's, went home bewildered and once more heart-broken.

Craigie took pity on Ben and ordered him on a business trip to New York for a diversion. Before he could leave, however, old Mississippi called him from grief to battle. For the spring freshet came swiftly, assailing the incompleting dam anew; and Ben joined the other workers laboring to save it, while their womenfolk looked on. (*The story continues in detail.*)

THE blown glimmer of the lantern was so little more than an imperfect black that Mrs. Craigie did not recognize any of the other miserable women until she peered into their eyes. One or two of them she knew for the wives of laborers, and called them by name. Another was a Greek, another a Bulgarian. She could not talk to them, but her sympathy was conveyed in a pressure of their cold clenched hands.

Then she came to Odalea, and was startled a moment before she understood—or thought she did—and vouchsafed a somewhat cheery comfort:

"Miss Lail! What are you doing here? Oh, of course! But don't worry. Mr. Parrish just left me. He's quite all right."

"That's good! Thank you," said Odalea; and Mrs. Craigie flattered herself for her tact in omitting to mention that Ben Webb had also just left her.

Suddenly in a bullwhip lash of wind the lantern was smashed and broken glass rained on their shoulders as the flame was torn



"I'm very fond of you, but—well, I could never have been a good wife to you."

from the wick and carried wherever the souls of lamps may go. The dark was infernal now, from the wolf-howl of the wind, the cattle-roar of the river, the hideous screams of the dummy engines seeking the cars loaded with sandbags and dragging them to their posts with a grinding of rails and a hammering of bells.

Finally Mrs. Craigie, an executive by marriage, felt called upon to order the women to better shelter. With foreign servility the wives bowed, curtsied, smiled—and remained. She turned to Odalea: "Really, Miss Lail! You ought not to be here. You'll take pneumonia. I'll tell Mr. Parrish I sent you home. I've got to wait, you know, for my husband."

Odalea nodded glumly, and went. She had no husband—and

never would have, she vowed, now that Ben Webb had gone East hating her, and with his heart doubly fallow for those Eastern coquettes, who would never love him as she would have loved him if he had only given her the chance.

As she made her way home, she thought of Ben asleep in a train speeding New Yorkward and was so doleful that when she passed Ben's mother at the top of the long steps, she d'd not even see her.

Nor did Mrs. Webb see Odalea. She was trying to shelter her eyes from the tempest, and pierce the night down there where Ben was undoubtedly seeking the harshest toil and the fiercest danger, as men do with never a thought of their mothers.



And Ben was just where she knew he would be—at the farthest reach of the cofferdam. The sandbags were slowest in arriving there, since most of the men were glad of an excuse to drop them at the nearest points of call. And the cry was everywhere: "More sandbags! More sandbags! Quick, for God's sake! Here! Not there, here! Damn you, here!"

At the ultimate point where the waves broke highest and ran through the wide gap between the Iowa cofferdam with its precious contents, and the Illinois structure, which was after all only a frame for the dam wall, Ben worked. He sat astride a heap of drenched sandbags with the billows swishing up over his legs, along his spine and leaping thence into the inclosure beyond. The wind had torn his hat away at once, and now it seemed to be trying not only to rip his clothes from him, but to wrench his hair out of his scalp.

The wretched men who toted the heavy bags—Italians, Huns, Finns, Chinese—almost feared to give them up, for they served as anchors, and when they were out of hand, the wind spun the men toward the abyss of the cofferdam.

But Ben, reaching out, clutched the sacks, stuffed them in place, pounded them in with his fists, shifted his seat, and climbed higher and higher with dreadful slowness, while the river climbed higher and higher with dreadful speed, and the wind skirled the waves from the river and seemed to yelp with laughter as they bounded from the wincing backs of the men.

All along the parapet hundreds of hands were reaching out for sandbags, jamming them home and reaching for more. It was as if coral insects waged a silly, futile battle against a stampeded sea.

The night went reluctantly from the sky, but the seethe of black clouds kept back the belated winter day till the storm had spent its strength.

With the last dark went the last sandbag—the last one of five thousand bags was in place.

Ben called in vain for many more—for just one more. But the gang that had lugged the others had dwindled to but a few, and now the parapet was empty of men.

The bleak morning light exposed the bankruptcy of the defense. From the north the Mississippi charged on. The wind had reeled south, and the air was calm, but the waters had not lost the momentum of the gale. The whitecaps plunged and flung, dripping with foam like the copious spittle of battle-horses.

There was such majesty in the defeat that Ben Webb, dismounting with cramped legs from the wall he had bestridden, found words incompetent when he confronted Craigie, patrolling the rampart with the grim doggedness of a general whose beleaguered city has mended its last breach in the wall. Ben grinned and said nothing.

All Craigie answered was: "Got a cigar?"

Ben's wooden hands tugged at the buttons and dived inside his soaked overcoat and his wet coat to a waistcoat pocket where they found two soggy cigars, too damp to have broken.



Ben sat gaping in unbelief that this nightingale could be his sister, the little Webb girl from Carthage.

In the shelter of Ben's body and his extended overcoat, Craigie made a light from a waterproof matchbox and gave Ben fire from his own sputtering weed.

A wave clubbed Ben over the shoulders and broke down inside his coat, but the cigars smoldered on.

For a moment Ben wondered at this sudden tobacco-hunger of Craigie's. Then he understood.

Craigie never smoked while there was work to be done.

There was no more work to be done.

They turned their whipped faces into the spray, and the smoke was wiped from their lips. As a dappled stallion breasts a corral, a wave rose from the stream and cleared the wall with ease. Another wave followed and sprawled midway. Another refused the barrier. The next with a mad neighing and grunting, just made it. The next crashed so hard that it knocked off a sandbag.

Other waves in their eagerness fought one another and failed where lesser waves won over.

Craigie and Ben, leaping this way and that to escape the breakers, saw the water gaining depth and turbulence far below

them where it had broken through to the inside of the great cofferdam. The end could not be far off.

"You better get out of here," Ben said. "No use makin' a widder of as nice a wife as yours."

Craigie gave him a forlorn look and did not budge.

After another while Ben spoke again, less from conviction than for the encouragement of Craigie:

"I don't think that wave went so far as the last one did, do you?"

Craigie shrugged his shoulders.

They watched the whitecaps now, and tried to compare the utter irregularity of the sizes and assaults of the individual breakers. For some time none quite overreached the parapet, and many died in a swirl about the sandbags. Just as hope began, the river heaved, and the highest breaker of all vaulted the wall. Another calm. Another breaker. A longer calm. A lesser breaker. A long, long respite with the waves disputing among themselves. A breaker that failed.

"Look!" cried Ben.

The high-water mark was not so high.

The tops of the sandbags were drying in the rising sun. The waves were subsiding everywhere. The morbid glare was gone from the river. Hadn't the river ceased to rise? To say that it had begun to fall seemed ridiculous. Yet there was a certainty in the air. Craigie threw away his cigar.

He and Ben walked as far as they could, shoreward. Then they ran—partly because they had time to realize how cold they were, partly because triumph filled them with a boyish exuberance.

When Craigie reached his men, he said to one of his lieutenants: "Tell the boys it's Sunday, and they'll still be in time for church. The dam will be waiting for them Monday morning."

The message was translated into all the languages of this Babel, whose mighty work had seemed to arouse the anger of the Lord, but whose steadfastness had won Him to repent His wrath and recall His weapons.

The gangs broke into cheers and dispersed—some, indeed, to their various temples, but more to their warm beds.

Craigie found his wife blue-lipped and agued, and his eyes gave her the kisses his lips dared not impart before his men. He hurried her to their car.

He looked for Ben Webb to offer him a lift, but Ben was scrambling up the long steps. He had seen his mother waiting for him. He did not see Hunter Parrish, who had looked at the stairway, given up the task of hoisting himself so high and turned to fling himself down on a bunk in one of the workmen's shanties. When the workman arrived, he gazed at the sprawling Titan, and leaving him undisturbed, lay down on the floor.

When Ben reached his mother where she stood nearly congealed, he scolded her with all his might. She tried feebly to scold him, but their very emotions were almost frozen. He commandeered the only vehicle in sight, a milk-wagon, and he and his mother rode home in that.

They quarreled furiously over which was the one to be taken care of first, and each drew the other a tub of scalding water and laid out the other's warmest clothing.

Ben was never so proud of his invention of instant hot water as now.

"You're to stay in bed for two days," his mother told him as he put her out of his room.

"I'm taking the train to New York this evening," he answered protestingly.

"But you've had no sleep."

"I'll sleep on the train, all the way. Get into your tub or I'll call the doctor."

That night, as the train carried him north, he stood on the back platform for a farewell look at his river and his dam. The river was placid as a floor and seemed to have no more motion. The dam slept serene in the moonlight.

The train ran on the new tracks halfway up the bluffs. As he turned to go into the sleeping-car, his backward glance caught a glimpse of the Lail home. Its lights were aglow. And that reminded him to wonder what had happened to Hunter Parrish. He had not come back to his room all day.

He could not have guessed that Parrish had just stumbled into the house and was hoarsely telephoning for a doctor. Those giants come down hard when they fall.

Nor could Ben have guessed that the doctor cast one glance at Mrs. Webb, thrust a thermometer under her tongue and told her to hold them both.

When he glanced at her temperature, he ordered her to get into bed and stay there. He said he would send two trained nurses at once, one for Hunter Parrish and one for her.

She refused to obey him and ordered him out of the house.



"All right!" he said. "I'll telegraph Ben to get off the train and come right back."

She yielded then on the one condition that the children should not be told of her shameful weakness. As she crept into her sheets, she wailed to the doctor:

"I feel like an old hound crawling off into a corner to die."

It was strange how lonely she felt with her home in the possession of strangers and all her children worlds away.

When the nurse was installed, Mrs. Webb fussed and bossed for a while, to the amusement of the doctor. Then she grew strangely content with repose and idleness. And the doctor did not like that so well.

Chapter Forty-four

MORE sleep was lost than made up by Ben Webb on his first long journey from home. He had sent others to great distances and supported them from afar in scenes that he had never

Mrs. Budlong purred on:
"A church-wedding would
be nice, of course; but I
should prefer to have you
come to me."



visited, and now he was making his first eastward voyage back along the track that his ancestors had covered in wagons.

The small-town man of this day knows great cities and foreign climes almost as vividly as his own home, thanks to the moving pictures. But the reality was exciting, and Ben dramatized it all by contrasting everything he saw with the Carthage in which he had spent all his life.

When the train crossed the Mississippi at Burlington, he thought of the bridge at Carthage and the surprise awaiting this leisurely water when it swept down the rapids and encountered the new dam.

Chicago he admired for its mighty battlements, its oceanic lake and its wind-wreathed throngs. But he said to it: "Just you wait till Carthage gets a start."

New York set him back when he wandered in the depths of the glittering abysses between its sheer precipices made with hands. Still, with a villager's instinct of self-protection from awe of anything alien, he consoled himself:

"Shucks, New York had only ten thousand population at the

end of the Revolution; and Carthage has fifteen thousand already."

His way to Petunia's boarding-house led him through streets of royal majesty, in each of which he hoped she dwelt. But it was in a shabby side-street that she resided. The poor thing was skimping! Well, he'd put a stop to that. He had plenty of money now, and nobody to spend it on.

The landlady, who had been a lady and landed, before the fates began to pick on her, did not live up to the comic paper or the two-reel-comedy advertisements. She was a sweet, shy little old thing, and when she learned who Ben was and that his visit was a surprise, she said:

"So you're her brother Ben! I rather expected to see an angel with wings and a halo. From what she says of you, you must be a saint. She's an angel herself. And sings like one. I never grow tired hearing her practice. And if you knew what it is to keep a boarding-house full of music-students, you'd realize what a compliment that is. She'll startle the world some day. If she only had a little Europe, she would (Continued on page 139)

Illustrated by Rico Tomaso

Wings and a Woman

By Samuel
Spewack

WHEN Mr. Spewack, writing in the first person in this tale, casually mentions flying over North Europe, he is telling only what he has often done. In and out of Russia, he has made a name for himself as one of the most daring of all the American correspondents in that topsy-turvy section of the world.



THEY were an ill-assorted couple even for Russians. She was fair, with very red lips and very blue eyes. He was a fat, oily little man at least twice her age, with a small chin and bushy brows.

They were late.

Breathlessly they clambered into the airplane, the girl smiling apologetically at me, the man frowning with his exertions.

"Don't like those clouds," he muttered in German. I assumed then that the remark was meant for me. Boarding an airplane at Helsingfors automatically makes you German.

"You've nothing to fear with the pilot we have," I reassured him with my best Berlin accent.

At this the Russian settled himself back in his chair and opened his fur-lined coat, and the girl began disposing of packages on the racks overhead and on the floor. From their conversation, conducted in Russian (why do Russians always assume that only Russians know their language?), I learned that they had just come out of Russia, and were on a buying spree. She was most anxious to get herself lavender silk tights in Paris, and to be photographed in Berlin. He was equally concerned about a Russian restaurant in Paris where, so a friend of his had told him, you could get the best roast duck in the world. In Berlin he intended getting six pairs of boots made for him according to a model he had seen advertised in an American magazine.

I gathered that she was a dancer and he some sort of Soviet official. She asked him, I remember, if his wife had written him,

and I thought at the time that Russia's economic reforms had not affected the vagaries of her domestic dramas.

As they finally settled into a tired silence, I looked over the edge of my newspaper at the pilot I had so highly praised. Just to look at the back of him was enough to give a man courage. It was such a broad, stolid, safe-looking back. I didn't know his name, though I had made the Helsingfors-Berlin trip at least a half-dozen times with this same pilot. An uncommunicative fellow, still young, but with gray eyes, prematurely grim, prematurely hard.

I knew he was a Russian because I had heard him swear in that language, and we all revert to our native tongue for honest, heartfelt oaths.

Another pilot, a garrulous Dane, had told me about him—the little he knew. He had called the Russian pilot "the talkless one."

"He hasn't a friend in the world," the Dane had added perplexedly, for his life was crowded with congenial cronies. "And he doesn't want one, so far as we can make out. Doesn't like women, either. Fights shy of them all the time. There's only



From his pocket the pilot whipped out a gun. "Get in!" he ordered.

the shapely nose. Then I saw the curiously expressionless eyes widen. The ungloved hand visible through the shutter window clenched, and the knuckles whitened. He opened his mouth as if to speak, yet said nothing. He threw his head back and laughed. I could see his laugh, but in the din of the motor it was soundless. Then he bent low, and the plane shot out to sea.

I regarded my fellow-passengers. The girl's very red lips were now pink-pale. Her eyes were closed. Her long gloved hands hung lifelessly at her sides. The little fat man sprang up like a grotesque clown, but the plane rose suddenly and threw him back into his seat. I saw him and the girl exchange one long look, and then as if the fear in them was too much to stand, the look snapped like a thin thread.

one love in his life, and that's his machine. Never saw a fellow so crazy about a pair of wings."

Yes, I knew that he was crazy about a pair of wings. The time I heard him swear—the only time—was when one of the idlers who lounge around landing-stations went up to his machine and began to tinker with her engine.

"The talkless one," I remembered, let out a stream of oaths in flawless Russian and kicked the would-be mechanic off the field. I never heard him swear again or even talk again—until—but that's the story.

Engine and propeller now roared maniacally. Soon we would bounce off into the water. I looked at my companions. The girl's pretty red lips were parted in delight, and her eyes shone adventurously. The man seemed ready to drowse off, or perhaps he was just thinking behind those sleep-glazed eyes, his hands spread over his paunch.

What a couple!

The pilot turned to look at us, his passengers. His leather helmet covered nearly all his face except those granite eyes and

We were now rising steadily, with just the slightest roll—perhaps a thousand feet above the earth. We dipped. The pilot turned about and stared. The plane leaped upward.

I thought he had gone mad. How else explain his actions? I rapped at the shutter window.

His head turned. I rose unsteadily to shout at him. He threw back his head and grinned.

I sank back into my seat then. I saw the blurred outline of dreary little Finnish islands, gray hills with bare trees rising shamefacedly upon them, lonely red fishermen's huts and toy boats upon the black waters—at best a melancholy and depressing spectacle. The fat man mumbled to himself.

The pilot did not turn again. He was driving into a wind that caused the wings to rattle like breaking crockery, and kicked the plane out of course with sickening regularity. Spotted clouds were directly overhead. Haze now shrouded the sea. Again and again the plane tottered on one wing, righted itself, rolled.

The girl lurched forward, and dropped on her knees. Thus she prayed, hysterically, crossing herself again and again. Her lips

twitched, but I could hear nothing in the din. The little fat man stared steadily out of the window.

Suddenly we began to descend, with a dizzying swoop, so that the sea appeared directly over us and the sky below. I thought it was the end. Miraculously—I remember how self-possessed the straight-backed pilot seemed in the wild gyration—we lifted again, and then struck the water. He sent the plane skipping to one of the gray islands, and halted. Even in my dazed perplexity I felt immeasurably relieved that we had left the uncertainty of clouds for even this bleak blotch of land.

The pilot leaped to the door. "Get out," he commanded. The woman moaned piteously; the man was too frightened to speak; but they both obeyed.

"You get out too," the pilot ordered me. "What's the meaning of all this?" I demanded.

"Get out!" he repeated, and I too obeyed.

I SHALL never forget that cold! And the rain poured down, and the wind howled. Of all the desolate islands that Finland possesses, this was the worst. Except for the four of us, there didn't seem to be another living soul upon it—not even a gull.

"How do you do?" I suddenly heard the pilot say in Russian. He was bowing to the girl. His reddened hand lifted the lifeless one of the girl half to his lips, and then he threw it from him as if it had been a stick of wood.

"Do you remember when I first kissed your hand, Olga Sverdeleyeva?" he cried. "Tell me, was it in the spring, in the fall, in the winter, or in the summer?"

Through those lavender lips, that only ten minutes before had been blood-red, came the whispered answer:

"It was in May, six months before war was declared." Her blue eyes widened pleadingly. "Mischa!"

The pilot burst into laughter.

"You lie, my little pigeon," he murmured, and there were tears—but not of laughter—in his eyes. "I first kissed your hand in March. You were sitting in your box at the opera. And in the darkness, that spend-thrift Ilior Fedorotovich let me slip into his seat beside yours, and I kissed your hand. For that little privilege I paid five thousand gold rubles."

"You never told me that." The girl's

voice might have come from her closed eyes, for her lips seemed not to move.

"Do you remember what you said to me when I told you that I loved you?"

The girl opened her eyes to look at the sky above as if in voiceless prayer and then answered tonelessly:

"I said—I said that I would love you until the last breath had left my body."

The pilot laughed again and stamped about, the mud squeaking around his boots.

"And to how many have you said the same, since you left our home and went back to Petrograd?"

The girl made no response, but the little fat man suddenly cried out in jealous wrath: "You never told me that, Olga Sverdeleyeva."

"Hush!" cried the girl. "I've never said that to anyone but to you, Mischa, and then it was not my love that made me say that. It was your love, your love that drowned me as the sea can, your love that choked me as an avalanche can, your love that burned me as fire can."

The face of the pilot now matched the sickly green of the little fat man.

"You never loved me?" he asked incredulously.

"Yes, I did love you." The girl brushed the rain from her mouth. "I loved you with a love that a mother has for her child. Not as a woman has for her lover."

"But I didn't ask you to be my mother. I asked you to be my wife," the pilot retorted.

"If I refused you, you said you would kill yourself," the girl declared. "Do you remember that—Mischa?"

"Bah, what's all this about, anyway?" the little fat man exclaimed. "What's over is over. Finished. Forgotten. The Russia you represent is dead. The Russia I represent is alive. To living Russia belong her women."

"Meaning that Olga Sverdeleyeva belongs to you?" the pilot queried. His eyes became even more granite-like.

The little fat man and the pilot looked at each other through the curtain of rain, and then at the silent girl.

"Very well, my little red doves," the pilot said, and his voice was sweet. "You shall belong to each other. Get in!"

The girl drew back in trembling fear; and the little fat man, planting himself on his feet set far apart, shook his head grimly.

"I'd rather die on land," he declared, a sickly smile lurking at the corners of his full mouth.

From his back pocket the pilot whipped out a gun.

"Get in!" he ordered.

The girl and the little fat man dazedly obeyed.

THE next thing I was conscious of was the faint thrum of the airplane, now miles beyond me, and of myself fishing for a cigarette with stiff wet fingers.

For two hours I walked about, smoking innumerable wet cigarettes while the rain continued to pour down with the black steadiness of an army on a night march.

I cursed all the Russians and that fate which had made me the unwilling bystander in the tragedy in the clouds. And then my cigarettes gave out.

I was seriously contemplating the choice of a muddy grave on land or a wet grave at the bottom of the sea, when the steady growling of a descending plane came to my ears. I didn't dare look up. I couldn't believe it. Had Mischa come back? Had the other two come back too?

I looked up.

It was the same plane I had so joyously set out in from Helsingfors.

And the man that brought her to the ground was Mischa, but—the cabin was empty!

"Get in," he called to me. "There are some dry clothes and vodka within. We're going back to Helsingfors."

"Where are the other two?" I demanded. There was no answer.

"I have a right to know," I added irritably.

"They're in Stockholm, probably in each other's arms," he replied.

"You didn't kill them?"

The pilot shook his head.

"No," he said. "I was going to crash the three of us—that's why I left you here—but once I was back in the air again, fighting a sixty-mile gale, my common sense took command."

My mouth dropped.

"You didn't kill them!" I repeated idiotically.

"No," the pilot grinned. "It meant murdering my airplane. And what woman, I ask you, is worth even an inch of these wings?"

THE RENAMING OF QUIT

(Continued from page 91)

blackened ash showed where the fire had been.

Nearly exhausted and breathing in short, choking gasps, the Squire had run on, hoping inexpressibly that his pursuer would be stopped by the flames. Looking back as he ran, he saw the mountainous shape of the elephant rush from the smoke and start relentlessly down the trail after him. There seemed to be no way of escape left. The stunted trees scattered here and there along the plain were none of them over fifteen feet in height, and if he tried to take refuge in them, the elephant would break them down like reeds. The nearest house where he might find help was miles away, and as the black shape loomed up larger and larger, the hunted man felt that death was very near. Yet still he pressed on, looking curiously at the sky and the sun and the world around him as one about to die might do.

Then as he swung around a great thicket of tangled acacias and was hidden for a moment from his pursuer, he saw still left a last desperate chance for life. Beyond the patch of brush was a spot on the plain where the grass grew longer and was of a darker green than elsewhere. Squire Weston had been warned by his overseer to look out for aard-

vark diggings in such places when riding over the veldt, for that strange anteater with the ears of a mule and the eyes of a cow, brings up the rich soil when it digs, and the grass always grows lush and tall around one of its burrows.

Stopping for an instant and zigzagging back and forth in wide circles so as to tangle his trail, the hunted man suddenly took a flying leap into the long grass and scuttled on his hands and knees down the deserted burrow which he found there. It is no safe thing to creep into an old aardvark's diggings, for one may find a rock-python or a puff-adder or a black mamba there ahead of him. A man with an enraged elephant on his trail, however, has no time to take account of other possible dangers, and the Squire went to earth like one of the foxes which he used to hunt across his Devon moors.

Scarcely had he disappeared from sight when crashing through the brush, the black killer reached the spot where he had stood but a moment before. Trumpeting shrilly, his ears pricked up and his stumpy tail cocked above his great back, the monster looked about from side to side with quick glances from his twinkling little red eyes. Not spy-

ing the fugitive anywhere, he stamped down a thicket and with thrusts of his vast body sent tree after tree crashing to the earth as his sense of smell told him that the hated human was in hiding near by. Then, staring sullenly around with uplifted trunk, the monster began to follow the windings of the hated man's trail toward his strait and meager hiding-place.

By a desperate effort the Squire had managed to crawl backwards some six feet down the burrow. At that point the tunnel took a sudden turn, and try as he would, he could go no farther. From where he lay he could see the sinister monster scrutinizing every foot of the plain as it drifted nearer and nearer to him. If it once discovered his hiding-place, he knew that he would be dragged out of the hole by the elephant's trunk to be stamped to death under his vast feet.

Winnowing the air before him through his sensitive nostrils as he came, the great beast moved like doom nearer and nearer to where the man lay hidden under the tangled grass. Then, just as the Squire unconsciously tensed his muscles for the screech with which the elephant would announce its discovery of his hiding-place, he heard a sound

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which seemed sweeter to his listening ears than any which they had ever heard before—and yet it was only the whimpering of a frightened dog.

Once again, whining with fear, Quit sank his sharp teeth into one of the elephant's hindlegs. Once again the great pachyderm seemed to transfer all his rage from the man to the dog. Stamping desperately, he tried again and again to crush Quit. Failing to do this, he whirled frantically around and around, striving to strike or seize the elusive dog with his trunk. Each time Quit whirled with him, always keeping behind his bulk, and always drawing him farther and farther away from his master's hiding-place. At last,

roused to a perfect frenzy by the dog's yelps and nips, the elephant abandoned all further search for the hidden man and rushed away after Quit until he was lost to sight behind the thicket.

Squire Weston wasted not a moment of the respite which had again been vouchsafed him. Crawling out of the burrow, he fled away along the trail in an opposite direction to that in which the elephant had gone, and an hour or so later, panting and exhausted, wet with sweat and smeared red with clay, he staggered up on the wide, deserted veranda and dropped half-fainting into a hammock. For long he lay there in a stupor of exhaustion, to be aroused at last

by a silken head nestling against one of his dangling hands, and looked down into Quit's brown eyes, gazing up at him with a world of love and devotion in their depths.

A moment later, from a cool corner where he had been taking a siesta, Grit trotted complacently out to greet his master, apparently entirely unaware that he had been found wanting in any way. The Squire regarded him sternly for a moment and then stooping down, changed the engraved collars of the two dogs, and like an accolade clasped the one marked "Grit" around the neck of the coach-dog, who, although he feared mightily, had not faltered when the great test came.

THE STARBUCK PUZZLE

(Continued from page 76)

He was of medium height and squarely built, with blue eyes and a thick brown toothbrush mustache. As he reached the head of the stairs I stood aside to let him pass.

"Are you one of the plain-clothes men?" he asked me.

"W-why, no. I came with Dexter Drake, the detective."

Then I remembered that my friend had once warned me against talking too freely with men who might be reporters.

At that moment the door of the death-room opened, and the photographers with their apparatus came out and went downstairs past us.

Drake came down from the floor above. We went into the bedroom again, the stranger following us. He touched my friend's arm.

"My name is Starbuck, George Starbuck. My butler telephoned—"

Inspector Sorby wheeled round. He had been looking out of one of the front windows. We four were alone in the room now, with that ghastly presence there on the bed.

As Starbuck limped forward to shake hands with the Inspector, I noticed an ugly bruise on his left cheek.

"Have the Yonkers police found your assailant?" Drake asked.

"I don't know. I came here straight from the house up there." His voice was unsteady—as if the effort of getting home at all in his bruised condition had been almost too much for him. "I must sit down—"

He sank into an armchair in the middle of the room. Glancing toward the bed, I saw that a sheet had been drawn over the dead man's face.

"The butler has identified your uncle, Mr. Starbuck," Drake said in a low tone, "but if you would kindly—"

The man raised his haggard face, on which the bruise stood out.

"But I don't know my uncle from Adam. He left America when I was a baby in arms. Even our correspondence began only a few months ago."

Sorby asked him about the recent letter from Dr. Starbuck, which the butler had said contained some reference to Chinese enemies.

"I think, Inspector, that you'll find the letter in the rack on the writing-table in my bedroom, at the back of this floor."

"I found it myself a few minutes ago," Dexter Drake said, "saw the Chinese postmark, and took the liberty of reading it."

"That's quite all right," Starbuck murmured. Then Drake told him that we had talked briefly with his uncle's friend, Mr. Witherspoon.

"My butler mentioned a Chinese gentleman also. Do you think—"

BUT Sorby came back at that moment, with the letter in his hand. At Starbuck's suggestion he read it aloud. The opening

paragraphs expressed the old man's pleasant anticipations of seeing his nephew and his own land after thirty years, said he would like to go into the country somewhere as soon as possible, as he had writing to do. Then came the paragraph which had so important a bearing on the case:

"It is wise for me to leave China. I have made enemies here in recent years. With the annuity you offer me, I shall be free of material cares. I shall be safe. That is all I ask of life now."

"An annuity!" Sorby echoed. "That was very decent of you, sir."

"Not at all," the young man answered. "Dr. Ira was my father's only brother. My father was a rich man. I suppose my Aunt Sarah knew what the brothers quarreled about, but she never told me. Why,"—Starbuck turned to Drake,—"*perhaps* I know less about my uncle than you do—after your talk with that early friend of his, Mr. Witherspoon. And I've been wondering—could my uncle have brought some treasure on his person, something which somebody knew about?"

Starbuck was surprised to learn from Drake now that his uncle was planning to write his memoirs. He had not known even that. The Yonkers house, he said, would have been an ideal place for writing, and the gardener's wife was a good cook. He seldom stayed there himself now. His office manager had resigned a few months ago because of ill health, and he was practically tied to the New York office. Yesterday when that broad-faced man who looked like an Oriental had run at him on the road up there, he had thought the man mistook him for some one else—because what should any Chinaman want to kill him for? But when the butler telephoned this morning that Dr. Starbuck had been killed with a Chinese dagger, then he remembered that his own bedroom here looked on that runaway. He had blamed himself horribly for not warning his uncle last night.

"But your action was perfectly natural," Drake said. "You picked yourself up, went home and went to bed."

Sorby told us then that he was going to the Chinese consul himself. The body would be removed to the mortuary within the hour.

As Drake and I followed the Inspector into the hall, two waiting policemen passed into the death-chamber. The house would be in their hands now for several days.

At the head of the stairs Sorby grasped my friend's hand. "It's a regular Chinese puzzle! I'm depending entirely on you, Mr. Drake."

"We're in deep water, Sorby," my friend said in a low tone. "This case seems more amazing to me every minute."

When we returned to the bedroom, George Starbuck was still sitting in the armchair, staring with stricken eyes at that shrouded figure on the bed.

Drake suggested that Starbuck should go and lie down. He did look all in.

With a murmured, "Thank you," he rose, shook hands with us both, and limped painfully down the hall to his own room.

Drake had got rid of him because he wanted another look at those diaries in the library. But he spent only a few minutes with the books marked "1900," "1924" and "1925." Then he reclosed the leather trunk.

"What a pity, Howard, that those memoirs will never be written! That little old man went through the siege of Peking. Think of it!"

I had never seen Dexter Drake so quiet when working on any case. "In deep water," he had told the Inspector.

Men came with a stretcher to remove the body to the mortuary. Drake and I went down to the wide lower hall, where we waited respectfully until the stretcher-bearers had passed out of the house with their gruesome burden.

And then a most unexpected thing happened—an astonishing thing.

In the open doorway of the house a dignified Chinese was standing, a Chinese in American clothes. He had a long, drooping, scanty black-and-gray mustache. The police had let him through, I suppose, knowing that Dexter Drake was still in the house.

The butler, who had reappeared from somewhere, was showing the visitor into the drawing-room. As Blodgett started to go upstairs, Drake said to him: "Will you tell Mr. Starbuck that if he does not feel well enough to come down, I am interviewing his uncle's friend?"

Blodgett whispered excitedly: "Yes, *that's* the man who was here last night to see Dr. Starbuck. He says his name is Mr. Chang."

WE went into the drawing-room. From the moment I saw Mr. Chang with the light from the window full on his face, I put aside any suspicion that he could be implicated in the murder. I don't know how Confucius looked, but at fifty-five he might have looked like Mr. Chang.

After Drake's introduction of himself and me, we sat down together. My friend treated the visitor with great respect. Anyone would have.

I had always read that the Chinese were experts in concealing their feelings, but Mr. Chang had horror in his dark slanting eyes. This was the story he told us, in his almost perfect English:

He had met his honorable friend Dr. Starbuck in Peking seven years before. The link between them was a common interest in the classics of Chinese literature. Since Mr. Chang started two years ago on his journey around the world, they had corresponded occasionally. Mr. Chang had been three months in New York, where he lived at the Hotel Chelsea, taking his meals in a neighboring Chinese restaurant. Dr. Starbuck had written him from Chicago, inviting him

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to call here last night. No, he did not come on business, only to greet the honorable Doctor. He had promised to bring him this morning certain memoranda on a point of recent Chinese history, for use in his memoirs. Politics? No, Dr. Starbuck's interest was purely historical. Enemies? He knew of none. If Dr. Starbuck had enemies, they must be among Occidentals in China—not the Chinese.

Drake was careful to breathe not a word about Chinese clues. He merely mentioned "a knife" as the instrument of death.

But as I watched the grave face of the Oriental before me, I realized that if he knew anything about the dead man which he did not wish to disclose, he would not disclose it.

The butler came into the room. Mr. Starbuck sent his great respects to Mr. Chang; he had had a slight accident, but as soon as he was able to walk without pain, he would do himself the honor of calling on Mr. Chang at his hotel.

The Chinese gentleman took formal leave of us and went away.

Drake led me to a drug-store on the corner, where there would be a telephone-booth. He had remembered the name of an American civil engineer, long resident in Peking, but now in New York.

When Drake came out of the booth, I knew from his eyes that he had learned something. But he said not a word until we were seated in a taxicab.

"Howard! As Sorby would say: 'The plot thickens.' My engineer friend declares that Dr. Ira Starbuck was wise in leaving China, that he had been going wrong for some time, and that he was involved—among other things—in illegal traffic in opium. No doubt the proposed memoirs were designed to whitewash him."

Well! That did ease somewhat my sentiments of pity for the old man foully murdered in his bed. But it made him vastly more interesting as the victim of a mysterious Oriental crime.

Drake stopped the taxi at the telegraph office in West Twenty-third Street. "You know Dr. Ira Starbuck came from Syracuse," he said. "I'm wiring the Syracuse police for certain data. Then, if you'll drop me at the Grand Central Station, I'll run up to Yonkers and get on the trail of George Starbuck's assailant."

THE four hours of Drake's absence I spent quietly at home, reading a big book of his on China. As an educator of youth, my friend the detective beat Harvard to a frazzle. When at last he came home, he lighted a cigarette and threw himself down on the lounge in the sitting-room.

"At the Yonkers station," he said, "no Chinese was seen yesterday. You know it's not far to the Subway at Van Cortlandt Park."

Then he asked me to hand him his briefcase. He took out the dagger he had borrowed from the police.

"I've been somewhere else too," he smiled. "To an amateur collector of Chinese weapons. I thought this dagger was modern. It is. A spurious form, too, that cloisonné hilt. But a man capable of planning such a crime would have brains enough to use somebody else's weapon."

Drake lay there lazily blowing smoke-rings in the air.

"The world will ring with this case," he said suddenly. "For motive and sheer evil daring it beats anything you've ever heard of, my dear boy. This is no passionless crime, but premeditated murder in cold blood. And we are dealing with a motive powerful enough to sweep away the habits of a lifetime. Now I ask you, Howard: what is that motive?"

I was utterly taken aback. "You might as well ask me," I said, "to tell you a rule for squaring the circle."

As often before, I sat looking at Dexter Drake in sheer wonder. Lying there on the couch, the cigarette poised in those slender brown fingers, the friendly smile on his high-bred face, he seemed personally miles removed from the ugly world of crime. Yet I knew he was really more formidable than a dozen Inspector Sorbys.

That evening at dusk he went out again. He did not tell me where he was going—just murmured something about meeting a policeman. When he came home, about ten o'clock, I noticed a triumphant glitter in his eye. But he would not talk about the case.

I should have gone with him the next morning to the preliminary inquest, but among my letters was one from the bank which looked after my small investments, asking me to call there at ten o'clock.

Drake told me at the luncheon-table that no important new fact was brought out at the inquest, which had been adjourned for ten days. The Chinese consul, he said, had no information of value. From Mr. Chang the police had secured the names of certain associates of Dr. Starbuck in China, and cables had been sent. Mr. Witherspoon had scouted the idea that "Ira" could have been robbed of anything valuable; but no one, not even George Starbuck, could say what the dead man *might* have carried on his person. All his recent letters to Witherspoon and the nephew—you know he had first written George only a few months ago—had been carefully gone over by the Inspector, but nothing momentous was found in them except that vague reference to enemies. The papers in the dead man's pockets were negligible, and if he had secrets he did not trust them to his diaries, which were mostly—the recent ones, anyway—mere records of business and social engagements. Sorby and Starbuck had gone over them together yesterday afternoon, while Drake was in Yonkers and elsewhere.

"Good old Sorby," Drake smiled, "is depending on me to unearth something yet. Well, it may be unearthed any moment now."

WE were still at the luncheon table when a telegram came.

"Ah!" The detective leaped to his feet, tearing open the envelope, while I waited, without breathing, for him to speak:

"Seven words, Howard—only seven words, but the meaning they carry is voluminous."

He rushed to the telephone in the hall, rang up our garrulous neighbor on Park Avenue, and made an appointment to call for him in ten minutes. Then he went down to his study and shut the door. I was sure he was talking with Inspector Sorby on the other wire.

When he came back to the sitting-room, he said to me:

"I have just given Sorby the surprise of his life. This is one of those cases, Howard, where circumstantial evidence is more convincing than any human testimony *can* be. I now have circumstantial evidence enough to hang a prime minister."

Then he added: "Not a word to Witherspoon about that telegram."

Driving downtown with us in our taxi, Mr. Witherspoon was less talkative than he had been in his own car the afternoon before. Drake's excuse for bringing him down there again was that he might need him to verify something. I wondered.

When we arrived at the Starbuck house, the butler told us that Inspector Sorby was with Mr. George in his bedroom on the second floor.

The two men were smoking together, George Starbuck behind his writing-table, Sorby lounging opposite in an armchair.

When we had exchanged greetings, Mr. Witherspoon caught sight of a woman's photograph in a silver frame which stood on the mantel.

"Why, that's Sarah Biggs!" he cried, running over to the mantel, where Drake and I followed him. "Haven't seen your aunt for thirty years, Starbuck, but I recognized her at once—aged, though, like me."

It was a tragic face, that face in the photograph, and I was not sorry to turn away from it and accept Starbuck's offered cigarette. Dexter Drake said he was not smoking, and we sat down.

Starbuck was looking better today, though the bruise on his cheek was still ugly. As I saw him now, sitting there behind his businesslike writing-table, I wondered how I could have mistaken him yesterday for a reporter. He looked what he was, a business man of some wealth. His thick brown toothbrush mustache was like a smudge across his hard upper lip.

Drake's manner was quite nonchalant, and he sat with one hand in his pocket. In his other hand he held that eight-word telegram.

"Gentlemen," he said, glancing from Mr. Witherspoon in his small blue chair to George Starbuck, then to Sorby and me, "have any of you been able to imagine a motive for this murder?"

Starbuck flushed. "I had," he said, "imagined a motive, but when I saw Mr. Chang at the inquest this morning, it seemed to me—well, impossible. Now I don't know what to think."

Mr. Witherspoon—for once—said nothing at all.

Drake flicked open the telegram. "It's from the Syracuse police," he said, "and by means of it I can put my hands at any moment on the murderer of Dr. Ira Starbuck. The telegram reads:

"Henry Arthur Biggs, July twenty, eighteen ninety-five."

I chanced to glance at George Starbuck. Something was happening behind the bruised mask of his face. But in a moment he had found his voice.

"Mr. Drake," he said, "you surprise me! But—well, I have a paper here in a secret drawer—this table belonged to my father John Starbuck—and this paper tells more than your telegram tells you."

He pulled out a drawer, pressing something; I heard a sliding of wood against wood; then his left hand came up with an envelope. He was looking at Dexter Drake so intently that his eyes were like blue fire.

The next second a shot rang out—deafening, terrifying.

Mr. Witherspoon flew past us, screaming, into the hall.

Drake and Sorby rushed to George Starbuck, who had fallen out of his chair to the floor. The butler came tearing up the stairs; the policemen on guard rushed in—it was pandemonium.

"My God, Drake!" Sorby was saying. "He might have shot *you*, or me!"

"THE SEVEN THREATS"

Under this alluring title Elsa Barker has written her best detective story so far. The method used by the detective in solving the crime is absolutely new, and as convincing as it is novel. The story will appear in an early issue.



Miss BARBARA STREBEIGH

The Lovely Young Daughter of MRS. JEROME NAPOLEON BONAPARTE



UST a year and a half ago, Miss Barbara Strebeigh, charming blonde debutante daughter of Mrs. Jerome Napoleon

Bonaparte, made her bow to society.

She adored the deluge of social events that followed. But Barbara Strebeigh also loves the out-of-doors. So, after a brilliant season of dinner-dances, costume balls, charity bazaars and after-theatre-supper-parties, she bought a trunkful of smart new clothes and went West to that gorgeous winter playground that stretches along the California coast from San Diego to Santa Barbara.

Golf in crisp, yet balmy air; tennis in a salt breeze; riding in the brilliance of California sunshine; driving her car through the finest forests in the world. All this she adores even more.

But whether in the formal atmosphere of her mother's New York drawing room, on a steamer *de luxe* bound for a summer in Europe, or engaging in the sports she loves so well, Barbara Strebeigh holds to the standards of her group and class. She dignifies her youth and loveliness by taking those subtle pains with her toilet that the well-born girl is brought up to know.

POND'S Two Creams, used daily, are the method she pursues, because as she says, "They keep the skin exquisite." You should

*points out that the care of the skin
is an important social duty*

"THERE is one personal obligation that follows a girl wherever she goes—the care of her skin. With Pond's Two Creams this is easily accomplished. Swiftly and surely they work to keep the skin exquisite. That is why their use has become a habit with the girls of the younger set."

Barbara Strebeigh

use them yourself every single day as follows:

First Step: Whenever your skin needs cleansing, apply Pond's Cold Cream generously. Leave it on a few moments so that its pure oils may

penetrate every pore. With a soft cloth wipe off the Cream—and such a lot of dirt comes, too, you'll notice! Repeat the treatment, finishing with a dash of cold water or a rub with ice to close the pores. On retiring give your skin this same thorough cleansing with Pond's Cold Cream and, if your skin is dry, leave some of the cream on until morning. When you waken, your face will be clear, fresh, and free from lines.

Second Step: After every cleansing with Pond's Cold Cream except the bedtime one, smooth over your skin a wee trifle of Pond's Vanishing Cream. You will love the soft even finish it gives your skin, the velvety, glowing tone. And you will notice that your powder clings to your skin with a new smoothness, and that it stays on too. Used before you go out, Pond's Vanishing Cream protects your skin from hot sun and wind and from the harsh grit of soot and dust.

Begin today to follow the method pursued by the beautiful younger women of society. Pond's Cold Cream now comes in extra large jars, both creams in two smaller sizes of jars and in tubes.

Free Offer Mail coupon for free tubes of these Two famous Creams, and folder of instructions for using.

The Pond's Extract Company, Dept. F.
133 Hudson Street, New York City.

Name _____
Street _____
City _____ State _____



THE TWO CREAMS the younger set is using

"No, no!" Drake said quickly. "I had him covered all the time from the pocket of my coat. He fired up at himself from the drawer of the table, where the revolver was."

Sorby leaned over the man. "He's stone dead. Shot through the heart. Why—there's another revolver in his pocket! He didn't mean to be taken alive."

I don't mind confessing that my teeth were rattling together. And that smell of warm gunpowder—it made me choke.

SORBY sent out everyone else but Drake and me and shut the door. Then he called Headquarters, using the extension on that writing-table, but he did not sit down. When he hung up the receiver, he turned and stood there gazing at Dexter Drake. There may have been more in that look than I understood, but I understood something. "Last night," my friend said very quietly, "I stood in the back yard here, with the policeman on guard, and watched Starbuck's shadow on the white window-shade of this room. He was so agitated that half the time he forgot to limp. He was not attacked on that road near Yonkers. The Yonkers police were not even notified until the next morning. He took no chances of having his country-house watched that night. Attacked because his window here looked on that runway! Clever—clever and extremely plausible. Why, Sorby, when the butler first mentioned that letter of Dr. Starbuck's about Chinese enemies, my suspicions leaped to this man—for the letter served as a ready-made cover. But I was puzzled. I had not discovered a motive then."

The Inspector just stood there—waiting. "I told myself from the first," Drake went on, "that if the Chinese had wished to kill Dr. Starbuck, they had every opportunity before he left China. Could there be some motive far back, then, in his American life? That is why I instantly seized upon Witherspoon, and just let him talk. Not till Starbuck came home, though, was the motive revealed in all its wonder. But I still had to prove my case."

Drake then broke the seal of that envelope which Starbuck had taken from the secret drawer. "We shall probably learn from this paper," he said, "how long the murderer had known that he was himself in danger from Dr. Ira Starbuck."

That was another new idea. Sorby's eyes opened wider.

It was a sheet of ordinary letter paper which Drake unfolded, and it was dated the night before. He read the contents aloud:

"To Dexter Drake:

"You suspect me. I read it in your eyes. But I am also watching you. If I have one second's notice that I am going to be arrested for murder, I shall escape you in the one way possible—by my revolver. If I can, I shall give you this writing.

"John Starbuck showed me the secret drawer in the writing-table, when he knew he was going to die. As nothing was stolen here, the police will not search for hiding-places. If I am safe, this 'confession' is safe. Strange how it eases a guilty mind to confess—if only on paper! I know how it

eased Sarah Biggs to confess to me on her deathbed, six months ago. From that hour I have known that I might sometime have to kill Dr. Ira Starbuck. She told me I must never meet him. She warned me.

"In the bottom of the old man's trunk yesterday, Inspector Sorby and I found typewritten copies of all his diaries, but the original diary for 1895 was missing. Did you take it away? The Inspector was only interested in reading more recent notes.

"When I made my plans, and invited the Doctor to this house, I never thought of diaries. And I had never heard of Witherspoon.

"It was an awful hour—that hour four months ago when I received the old man's letter that he was returning to New York! Even if I had gone traveling, become an exile, I should never have been safe a moment with that man in New York, where he could meet people who knew me.

"Sarah Biggs told me that all the time she was living here she kept widening the breach between the two brothers. John Starbuck believed her implicitly. When he was dead, she felt safer, because Ira was so far away. Would he not die in China? But daily she read every heading in the newspaper, every steamer and hotel arrival. It became a mania with her. All this she told me before she died. But she would never have killed Ira Starbuck.

"After her death I should have consulted a lawyer—but I dared not. The Starbucks have distant relations.

"The bruise on my face I made by pounding my cheek with a stone. I rolled down that rock and left tracks, limped back to the Yonkers house with dirt on my clothes. The Chinese dagger I had stolen from a curio-shop. Only a fool would have bought his weapon. At one o'clock in the morning, sufficiently disguised, I left the Yonkers house and walked to the Subway at Van Cortlandt Park. The night before, I had made chisel-marks on the back gate here, so I came in noiselessly with my own key. I knew where the ladder was. I drew felt-soled slippers over my shoes to make Chinese-looking tracks. I did not sign my crime with fingerprints. On my way back to the country place I buried the slippers and the rubber gloves.

"It is possible, Dexter Drake, that you have missed the one clue to my motive. The suspicion in your eyes may be only a general suspicion, like Sorby's. You may not be as clever as I fear you are. No doubt I am watched, and could not run away. But better a quick death than the life of a fugitive."

There was no signature.

Drake folded the letter and slipped it into his pocket.

BUT George Starbuck's confession left me almost as much in the dark as before. Why had he killed that old man? And how coldly he wrote of his father and his aunt Sarah—calling them by their full names, John Starbuck, Sarah Biggs!

I glanced at Inspector Sorby.

"But the motive!" he cried. "And the clues, Drake, the clues!"

"Witherspoon's talk, with the Doctor's diary for 1895, gave me the clues, Sorby—though I was not sure they were clues till the 'nephew' came home. Howard was with me in Witherspoon's car, when he told us about a railway wreck thirty years ago in which Madelon Starbuck was killed, with Sarah Biggs' husband and Sarah's two children. Little George Starbuck, he said, had been saved by a negro porter.

"Howard also read with me in the Doctor's diary about George's birth in a summer cottage near Syracuse, about the two months Dr. Ira remained there with Madelon and the child, the meeting of the brothers in New York after John Starbuck's return

from London, the quarrel which ensued, the telegram Dr. Ira sent to Madelon—still in Syracuse—telling her that he was starting for China and would never return to America. Madelon, we know from what happened, must have shown that telegram to her sister, Sarah Biggs.

"And when Sarah escaped from that wreck the next day—half-maddened with grief and terror, as she must have been—it is perfectly clear what she did. Remember that John Starbuck had not yet seen his infant son. Sarah was poor; her husband was killed; she was desperate. In a moment I will tell you how I know that it was not little George Starbuck whom the negro porter saved, but the youngest of those two children of Sarah's—sixteen days older than George. Sarah presented her child to John Starbuck, in the place of his son and heir who was killed in the wreck. Wealth and security for them both! Herself as aunt and nurse."

I glanced at the tragic face in that photograph on the mantel. She, too, like Madelon downstairs, seemed poignantly real now.

Drake went on: "It was after I saw the pretended nephew that I wired the Syracuse police to search the birth records for a son born to Sarah Biggs in that summer of 1895. Their answer, 'Henry Arthur Biggs, July twenty, eighteen ninety-five,' was the telegram I read to the man sitting at that table a few minutes ago, his own real name."

"But Drake," I cried, "whatever made you think that he wasn't the actual George Starbuck? How did you know?"

"But you also read, Howard, in the Doctor's diary about the baby nephew with eyes precisely like his mother's, though his nose was only a sketch. You heard Witherspoon tell how John fell in love with the pretty brown-eyed Madelon, twenty years younger than himself, and married her. You saw Madelon's portrait in oils in the drawing-room downstairs. And you saw, you several times mentioned, the blue eyes, the toothbrush mustache of the pretended nephew. Why, I knew from the first glance at him that he was not George Starbuck. Brown eyes don't turn blue. Then he had a motive for killing Dr. Ira—if he knew himself about Sarah's substitution of the children. Later I proved that he was faking his lameness. Then he did know. Then he was not attacked in Yonkers. He had killed the old man whom he dared to talk with on that Yonkers telephone, but dared not meet face to face—the old man who knew that the real George Starbuck was born with brown eyes."

Inspector Sorby dropped into the nearest chair. "Of course I suspected the man," he muttered, "but I could not see what he would gain by the murder. And to think that I had in my hands the typewritten copies of all those diaries!"

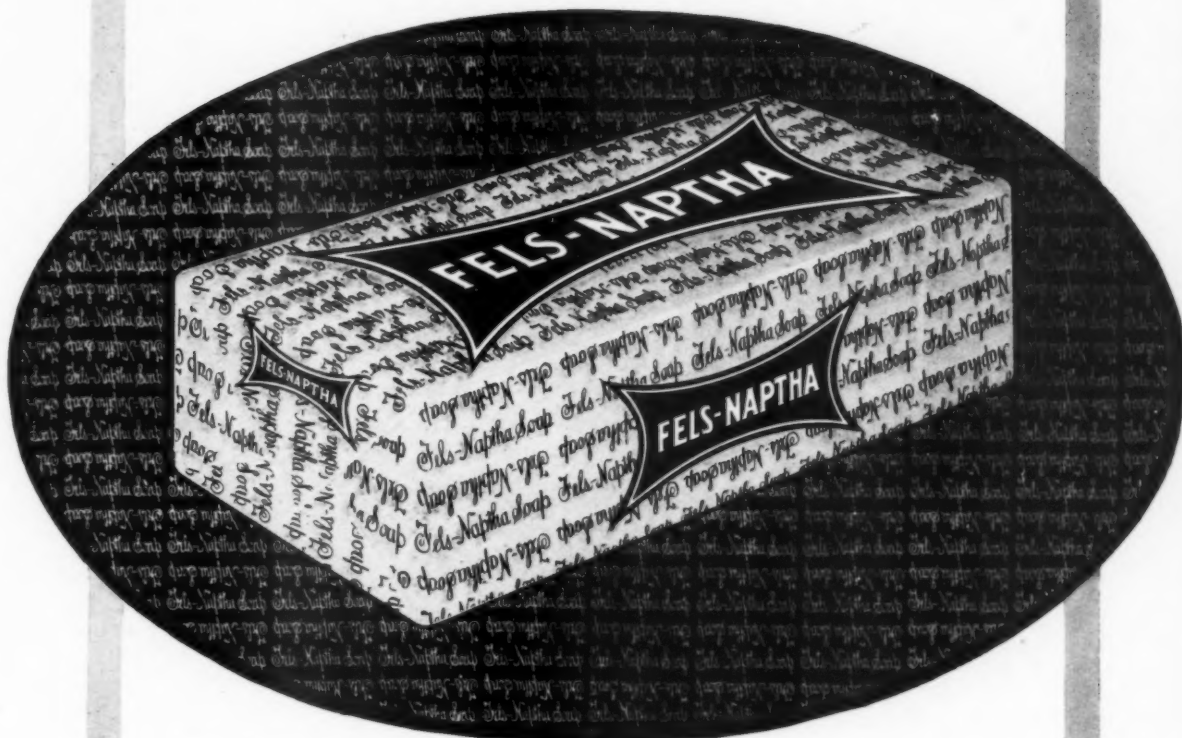
Dexter Drake took a scarf from the couch, went over and covered the staring blue eyes of that cold-blooded murderer lying on the floor. Then turning, he stood beside the writing-table, looking from Sorby to me.

"Think of this man's evil daring!" he said. "Without even consulting a lawyer to learn what his rights might be, between the two bare risks—of losing all or a half of the Starbuck fortune, and murder—he chose murder. No attempted compromise with Dr. Ira, no suit at law—murder. Talk about crises! Imagine what went on in his mind during that hour when, after receiving Dr. Ira's friendly letter saying that he was coming to America, this Henry Arthur Biggs who was known as George Starbuck plotted to make the old doctor his guest, then to kill him—after promising him a life annuity!"

"As Mr. Chang would tell you, the Chinese in their wisdom have a saying: 'A man cannot become perfect in a hundred years, but he may become corrupt in less than one day.'"

"Benchley"

That name has become a synonym for wit among our readers. Owing to an absence abroad, Mr. Benchley's "Mr. Peters" does not appear in this issue; but in the next number he comes back—stronger than ever.



When a woman puts her foot down—



Smell the naptha
in Fels-Naptha!

Many women get the extra help of Fels-Naptha by dissolving it in hot water, or chipping it directly into the washing machine.

Chipping Fels-Naptha only takes about 50 seconds. Try it! You'll be surprised and delighted with the results!

When she puts it down firmly, it is a sign she's stopped drifting in her search for helps that make housework easier. When a woman puts her foot down it means her mind is made up. She may have been tempted to try all kinds of soap and cleaners, but—

When she puts her foot down, it means she knows Fels-Naptha is more than soap.

When she puts her foot down to stay, it means she pays more attention to the washing help she actually gets, than to the form or color of soap. She knows from her own experience and that of her friends, that good soap and plenty of dirt-loosening naptha, working together in Fels-Naptha, give extra washing help she cannot get in any other soap, no matter what its form, or color, or price!

There is a very good reason why Fels-Naptha is more than soap—why it is a great deal more than just "naptha soap." Fels-Naptha is quality soap and plenty of dirt-loosening naptha combined in the Fels-Naptha way. This makes Fels-Naptha clean more easily and more quickly. Fels-Naptha does the work thoroughly! Safely, too!

Millions of women have made up their minds just that way. They'll tell you, as they've told us, that nothing can take the place of Fels-Naptha!

FELS-NAPTHA

THE GOLDEN BAR WITH THE CLEAN NAPTHA ODOR © Fels & Co.



Auto-Intoxication

-self-poisoning that is a drag upon the health and spirits of so many

AUTO-INTOXICATION is the price we pay for too much luxury—too little work. It is the result of too many miles by motor and too few on country walks.

We spend our nervous energy freely—we force ourselves with many things to do—but we let our bodies "loaf!" We over-tax our stomachs and we under-work our muscles.

Food remains within us for more than a span of a day, clogging the intestines—fermenting—setting up the poisons that produce Auto-Intoxication or Intestinal Toxemia.

These poisons cause sudden fatigue—lassitude—dullness. They derange the intestines. They have an extremely bad effect upon the nervous system. They sharpen nerves—they make men and women cross and irritable.

* * *

Few of us are free from Auto-Intoxication. For few of us live normally, few of us have hard outdoor work to do, few of us keep our bodies free from the poisons of waste.

Sal Hepatica relieves and prevents Auto-Intoxication because it promptly corrects internal "stoppage" and sweeps away poisons from the intestines.

Sal Hepatica is a palatable effervescent saline. Through the mechanical action of water plus the eliminant effects of several salts in solution, it induces prompt peristalsis.

It is of great help, not alone in Auto-Intoxication itself, but in many other conditions where the first step is to cleanse the system safely of those bodily poisons which are at the root of so much trouble. You ought to have a bottle in the house always.

Made by
BRISTOL-MYERS CO., N. Y.

Sal Hepatica



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THE VANISHED PASSENGER

(Continued from page 87)

the other way round. Oh, I wish they'd get a move on! Dearie, give this letter to the chief steward and say yours truly's got a sick mother and he'll have to do the best he can. Will you?" And she gives Annie the letter.

"A sick mother?" says Annie, taking it.

"That's the tale," says the girl, and then in a whisper: "Dearie, it was my steady wired me. He's on his way home from Canada. We've had a row and I took this job, you see. Now he's coming back. Mr. Spicer, the superintendent, he wont listen. But if I go away now, it'd be the end of me! Now," she says, "you get out—here's the place—and I'll sit back till he's got your trunk. You can take this with you," she says, giving Annie her suitcase. "What's in it belongs to the Company, anyhow. I don't want it any more."

Well, there they were. The taxi-man was glad enough to get another fare like that—all the way out to Jamaica somewhere, too; and Annie goes up the gangway with her own bag and a cheap little paper suitcase, along with a crowd of other passengers all just arrived and passed by the Customs. And she went down the curved staircase in the entrance-hall of the ship, and then she simply vanished.

NOW let me go on with the story. I know what you're going to say. Just wait and I'll explain it. I was just into my uniform when there came a knock at the door, and there was the chief steward, a little shrimp of a man with his head on one side and looking worried enough.

"Oh, you've come," he says, looking relieved for a second. "Have you a letter from Mr. Spicer?" I gave him the letter and he tore it open and read it. "That's all right," he says. "Get out into the entrance-hall and take your orders from the second steward. One of the boys said he heard you wasn't coming. Miss Boothby's on the other side. Have you been long on these ships, Miss Cotter?" I said, "No, not very long," and that was a fact—about five minutes. "Well," he says, "be as quick as you can." And he goes out.

The ship was in the river, sailing down toward the Narrows, when I came out and took my place in the entrance-hall. But there was plenty to do. All my rooms were full except that Number Seventeen, and you'd hardly believe how some of those women were lying down already and turning pale at the very thought of the sea, though it was as smooth as glass. You see they had nothing to do but think about it. If they'd been me, with work to do and a secret locked up in my breast, they'd have had no time to imagine themselves getting sick. You people see us stewardesses standing about, or sitting here the same as I'm doing now, doing a little mending and making the Palm Court look homelike, as I was saying; but you have no idea of what work there is in keeping a lot of women and children pleased and comfortable. . . . What's that you say? Well, I fancy we earn all we get, anyway.

And then late that evening, after dinner, the steward and the purser, they want to know if I've seen a Mrs. Pynzen, Number Seventeen B. I said I'd been to her cabin and seen her trunk, but as far as I knew, she hadn't been down off the deck. Then the hunt began. The assistant purser said he'd checked her off, and he had her ticket to prove it. Then where was she? Of course he wanted to know if they thought he had her in his vest pocket. Sailing days are trying for assistant pursers as well as stewardesses. The ship was searched the same as for stowaways, but nothing was found, as you may imagine. The Captain

had the pursers up in his room and tried to find out what Mrs. Pynzen looked like. A blonde, the purser thought. There was fifty blondes on the ship, all sizes. A hint like that didn't amount to much.

And finally the Captain decided that although Mrs. Pynzen had come on board according to the pursers—seeing they had her ticket—she must have run away again. The second steward was sure of it. He had been hurrying to the office just before sailing, and he saw a taxi drive out with a blonde girl in it. Didn't see her face, you understand—only her profile as the cab passed him. He remembered it, because most cabs are empty going out. Friends of passengers generally wait to wave good-bye at the end of the pier. That settled it for the Captain, and he sent a wireless to the office to tell them about it. And the voyage, my first voyage on the ocean, began. . . .

You're quite right there. I certainly don't tell this story to everybody who asks. I thought you'd credit me with ordinary common sense. Bless you, I knew you were different. Do you suppose I don't know all about you? A look at the list in the purser's office puts me wise to who's in my rooms. And there's a "Who's Who" in the library, even if I don't place people all at once. I've enjoyed your stories, madam, ever since I was in high-school. I don't know your husband so well, but I'm sure it's my loss. I made up my mind, if you were anyways human, to tell you the story of how I came to make it a profession. Not all famous people are as approachable as you, though. We had a writer last voyage, and he was all right—but his wife! She didn't want another deck-chair within twenty feet of her. Old Southern family. She ought to have taken a couple of suites, one for herself and another for her social secretary. She gave me a dollar when they got off at Havana. I very nearly told her I'd been taught never to take money from strangers. But her husband knew all about it, and squared us like a gentleman.

WHERE was I? Oh, yes. Well, it didn't look so simple when the ship got out to sea and the future was to be considered. Annie Pynzen had vanished into thin air, you might say, but I couldn't help being interested in what would happen to her, could I? Knowing her story, as you might say. And I had an idea, too, that perhaps she had misjudged her husband. She had been fond of saying she had never had a real chance in life, but neither had he. He wasn't fitted for commercial pursuits, really. He ought to have been sent into the Navy when he was young and been hammered into shape. Discipline was what both of them needed, you see. It's what everybody needs to a certain extent. You realize that when you work on a ship. It's irksome at first, and then, when you're used to it, you understand it and can't get on without it. Well, those two poor souls needed it badly. All he'd had was liberty to make a fool of himself, and all she'd had was bullying and hazing. And it had made them both desperate. Thinking it over, going south in fine weather, I could see that.

We had a good many passengers leave at Havana, same as you will, and the work was easier. Besides, I was getting used to it. Miss Boothby, the other stewardess and my senior, was a decent sort, married but separated and using her maiden name, and she gave me many little hints. We took a walk ashore in Havana, and if you'll believe me, I liked the place. I had had an idea those dago countries were impossible for white women. Shows how ignorant you can be, even in the United States. There's an atmosphere about them, if you get what

Winners of Life's Richest Prize

*They banished constipation—
skin and stomach disorders—
found vital, glorious health—
by eating one national food*

NOT a "cure-all," not a medicine in any sense—Fleischmann's Yeast is simply a remarkable fresh food.

The millions of tiny active yeast plants in every cake invigorate the whole system. They aid digestion—clear the skin—banish the poisons of constipation. Where cathartics give only temporary relief, yeast strengthens the intestinal muscles and makes them healthy and active. And day by day it releases new stores of energy.

Eat two or three cakes regularly every day before meals: on crackers—in fruit juices, water or milk—or just plain, nibbled from the cake. *For constipation especially, dissolve one cake in hot water (not scalding) before breakfast and at bedtime.* Buy several cakes at a time—they will keep fresh in a cool dry place for two or three days. All grocers have Fleischmann's Yeast. Start eating it today!

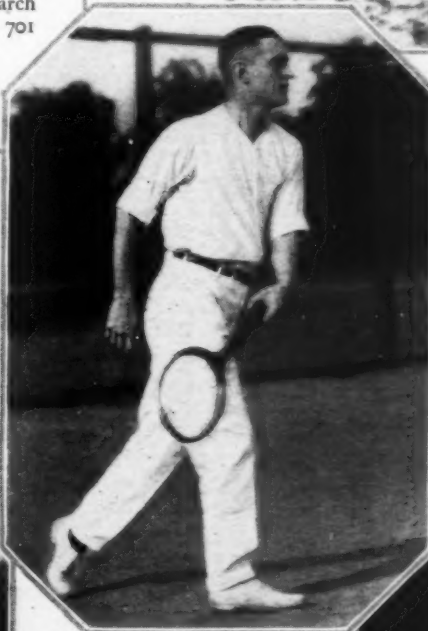
Let us send you a free copy of our latest booklet on Yeast for Health. Health Research Dept. M29, The Fleischmann Company, 701 Washington Street, New York.



"AFTER FOUR YEARS' SERVICE in Cuba and the Philippine Islands, I suffered greatly from indigestion. In fact, I had no desire to eat, and the mere sight of food nauseated me. Nothing I took gave real relief. A friend suggested that I take a couple of Fleischmann's Yeast cakes daily—I did. In about a month the attacks of indigestion had disappeared. I enjoyed my food. I was soon my old self again. Since then I have had wonderful health and a clear complexion—all due to Fleischmann's Yeast." **LOUIS B. THOMAS,**
Philadelphia, Pa.



"LAST DECEMBER, there appeared a blotch of little blisters at one corner of my mouth. They gradually spread on my face. I decided to try Fleischmann's Yeast. I can truthfully say, that, aside from clearing up the acne, it has improved my health in general. I am thankful for Fleischmann's Yeast." **GERTRUDE SCUDDER,** Detroit, Mich.



"YOU LOOK SO MUCH BETTER than we, who have had vacations, do," remarked several of my teachers today. "Is it the arduous work of summer school or prosperity that agrees with you?" The truth is that I am now a regular consumer of a product that I had known for years without realizing its health-giving properties. Fleischmann's Yeast has cured the constipation that sapped my strength for so long. Today I feel like a new man."

CHARLES F. WILLIS,
Baltimore, Md.



THIS FAMOUS FOOD tones up the entire system— aids digestion— clears the skin— banishes constipation. Start eating it today.

"Gas?" "Oil?" "BRAKES?"

SIDE by side with the need of knowing you have plenty of gas and oil, is the need of knowing that your *brakes* are in A-one condition every time you start out.

And this is no cranky "fuss-budget's" idea, either!

Remember the number of cars in active use—increasing by leaps and bounds—you notice the increase every time you drive out. Remember the number of careless pedestrians, increasing the motorist's responsibility, calling on him to do both his own and the pedestrian's thinking, too.

And remember that the *only really active safety aid* your car gives you is its *brakes*!

Have them Inspected— it costs nothing

Any dealer displaying the Multibestos Service Station sign will inspect your brakes thoroughly without any expense to you. And if they need relining, he will install lining of the highest quality promptly, efficiently and at the right price.

Can you afford to take the chances of not *knowing* what your brakes are like?

Write for a copy of "Braking Safe," a booklet full of very important information about brakes.

Department R B 6

MULTIBESTOS COMPANY

WALPOLE, MASS., U. S. A.

A large black and orange sign like this will guide you to dependable brake linings.



THE LINING MOST CAR MAKERS SPECIFY

MULTIBESTOS

REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

BRAKE LINING

I mean. The past is there in the present, you may say. Now, in a place like Rovereto, New Jersey, there's scarcely any present, no past, and no future. Nothing to get romantic about, I mean. It's difficult to explain. Anyhow, I liked it. Miss Boothby didn't, so there you are. As for Cartagena, when I asked her about it, she says: "Oh, don't you go on shore there, my dear. It's a terrible place!" But somehow I made up my mind, unless I was sick, I'd take a chance. I didn't know any more about it than about Havana, but I had my reasons.

Two more days and we were there. And for the life of me I couldn't help thinking of that girl's husband and how he'd run away from Rovereto and Twenty-third Street, to that fairy city sitting in the ocean and all shining with golden domes and Spanish castles. Oh, with your pen, madam, you could describe it, and I'm sorry you're not going so far. To me it was beautiful beyond words. Not that I wasn't frightened. There's a rule the Company have, that we can't go on shore with gentlemen friends unless we're married, or at least engaged, to them. Miss Boothby wouldn't hear of it. So there was nothing left for me to do but go alone. And although I started when the sun was only just setting, and thinking to see that wonderful place in the twilight,—such was my ignorance, you see, never having been in the tropics,—what was my surprise to have it get dark like some one had closed a door, just as I was arriving in the city, the harbor being a long walk outside the walls. And such walls! Going through was like a tunnel. And as soon as it was dark it was moonlight, if you understand what I mean. Like liquid silver. I came into that place like a lost spirit from another world. I didn't know where to turn or what to do. There were palm trees—real ones, not made of cloth like we have here—and a place that looked like a convent along one side, and there was a fountain in the middle of a square. So beautiful, to my way of thinking! But it was a wonder I noticed anything at all, I was so scared. I couldn't be sure I'd get back to the ship.

I saw a sort of store where I thought I could get information, at the end of a long arcade, and I started across in the moonlight to reach it. And then a carriage drove up and the driver stopped to let me get in. I was so surprised I did just that. He says "Hotel," and, thinks I, there'll be somebody there to put me wise to what I want to know, and I says: "Yes, go on." And he drives up the dark street past the store, which was a liquor saloon with several tough-looking parties drinking, so I was thankful I hadn't gone in. I know better now, of course. It was just my ignorance.

Well, there wasn't but one hotel in the place as far as I could make out, and in a minute we were there. Very strange, if you ask me, and I made matters worse by poking my head into the bar. A tall young man gets up and comes out to me. "What would you be wanting, miss?" he asks, and I felt he was safe enough. "I'm the stewardess off the ship," I says, "and a friend of mine in New Jersey is married to a gentleman down here, a Mr. Oscar Hemspley." That was the name Annie's husband took when he came down, you see. "I suppose," I says, "you couldn't tell me where he lives?"

HE stares at me seriously for a minute and scratches his ear. "You say he's married up in New Jersey?" he asks. "Well, that's too bad." He stares harder at me than ever. "I can tell you where he lives," he says, "since I suppose you got a message for him from his wife, but I dunno as it will do him much good."

"Why, he isn't in jail, is he?" I asks, trembling. "No, he aint in jail, far as I know, miss. But I was wonderin' if I'd

told the truth when I said I could tell you where he lives. He may not be living anywhere now. He's been at death's door for over a week now."

"Oh, please take me to him," I says. "It may be too late. And I really do have a message from his wife. She's a friend, a particular friend of mine."

"That's all very well, but you'll not be wanting to go to the sort of place he's in, I'm thinkin'," he says. "You see, miss, he hasn't been actin' down here as if he was married. It might be unpleasant for you, meetin' the señorita. Not that she isn't lookin' after him a sight better'n many a nurse would. She wont have him moved, and the doctor, he says it wouldn't do him any good. He's a dyin' man."

"WHAT'S the matter with him?" I says, and he tells me how Oscar Hemspley, as he called him, had gone into business with a half-breed and bought a small ship with a gasoline-engine. And one trip, coming round from a place called Rio Hacha, they'd shipped some big seas and the exhaust-pipe broke, and the poor half-breed was being choked to death in the little engine-room. Oscar, he dropped down in there and got him out after a struggle. But he couldn't get out himself. He managed to stop the engine before he crumpled up on the floor alongside of it. And he never got the gas out of his lungs. He'd been expected to die for over a week.

"This girl has kept the breath in his body," says my friend, "but it won't be for long. I'm sorry, miss." And he stood waiting, his cigarette behind his back, for me to say what I was going to do.

"I must go to see him," I says. "It's no time to stand on ceremony, is it?" "No," he says, "if you've a message from his lawful wife, it isn't." And then he asked me how Oscar came to leave his home. "He had money when he came here, but he was soon gipped out of most of it," he says.

"That's his own business, I guess," I told him. "Take me there, will you?"

He said he would, and we took the carriage, as had been waiting, and drove back to the square again. I couldn't tell you what they call it. I never went on shore there again. He went under the arcade and up a flight of stone steps to the floor above. There was a long passage with a lantern burning at the far end, and doors on each side, like the alleyway in a ship. And halfway down there was a door open and the light of an oil lamp streaming across. Some one was talking. We went along, and my friend touches me on the shoulder and nods as if to say: "This is it."

But I held on to him and made him come as far as the door. I was scared. The voice! His voice; but so changed. It was hoarse and weak, and it ran on and on in the same key. He was talking to somebody he called Chiquita. Over and over again it was, "Chiquita, Chiquita." I looked in at the door, but there was a screen so I couldn't see the bed. Beyond was a curtain drawn back, and there was a little balcony and the moonlight streaming over the old Spanish walls and towers outside. Chiquita, Chiquita! I shall never forget that word as he repeated it over and over. It was, in its way, the key. It was romance. It was all he'd starved for up there in Twenty-third Street. And in his babble you could have detected how he wasn't really unhappy. Why, it was the talk of a happy child—just a boy. And do you know she didn't understand a word of what he said except her name—Chiquita. Think of them there, talking by signs! And yet I dare say she understood him better than his wife did!

We stood in the shadow listening to his voice, and even then it was plain the sound of it was failing. Suddenly he began to laugh. "Ah, Chiquita, if she was to come, eh?"



This Saturated Lather

...soaks the beard soft

WHY is the tide of shavers swinging more and more towards Williams?

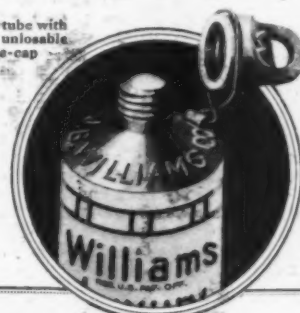
Because Williams softens the beard faster, stays moist longer and leaves the skin glove-smooth.

This pure uncolored shaving cream works up quickly into a rich, bulky lather—saturated with moisture. First it lifts the water-resisting oil-film from the beard, then it soaks all of each bristle soft. At the same time it lubricates the skin so that the razor just glides along.

To prove our claims we will send a week's trial tube on receipt of the coupon below or a postcard. Williams costs 50c in the economical double-size tube. It contains twice as much as the large size 35c tube.

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Canadian Address, 1114 St. Patrick St., Montreal.
Please send me free trial tube of Williams Shaving Cream. (Trial Size has no Hinge-Cap.)

Red Book, 1934

What becomes of the empty tobacco tins?

Of course, to most people an empty tobacco tin is just something to throw away. But there are exceptions.

A railroad fireman started a pile of Edgeworth tins on the American desert as a sort of shrine, he says. Passengers and employees, according to his story, caught the spirit and the pile grew fast.

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Still another use is brought to light by Mr. L. C. Quinn of New York. He says:

New York City

Larus & Bro. Co.
Richmond, Va.
Gentlemen:

As a member of the Edgeworth Club, I want to tell you of a little scheme I have to help the game along. When I take the last pipeful from the blue can, I always set it up in some conspicuous place where it may be seen by passengers on the subway or elevated platforms, or in an office window where passersby may have their attention mutely drawn to this very good smoking tobacco, which I have been using for eleven years. Maybe other members of the Club would like to follow suit when they have an opportunity.

Yours very truly,

L. C. Quinn.



To those who have never tried Edgeworth, we make this offer:

Let us send you free samples of Edgeworth so that you may put it to the pipe test. If you like the samples, you'll like Edgeworth wherever and whenever you buy it, for it never changes in quality.

Write your name and address to Larus & Brother Company, 8R S. 21st Street, Richmond, Va.

We'll be grateful for the name and address of your tobacco dealer, too, if you care to add them.

Edgeworth is sold in various sizes to suit the needs and means of all purchasers. Both Edgeworth Plug Slice and Edgeworth Ready-Rubbed are packed in small, pocket-size packages, in handsome humidors holding a pound, and also in several handy in-between sizes.

To Retail Tobacco Merchants: If your jobber cannot supply you with Edgeworth, Larus & Brother Company will gladly send you prepaid by parcel post a one- or two-dozen carton of any size of Edgeworth Plug Slice or Edgeworth Ready-Rubbed for the same price you would pay the jobber.

On your radio—tune in on WRVA, Richmond, Va.—the Edgeworth station. Wave length 256 meters.

My old woman says she's coming—coming! Oh, Lord!" he says, and then: "Go away, Chiquita—*vamos*. Ah, but you wouldn't, now. She'll only find a dead man. Don't you go, Chiquita." Oh, but it went to my heart! I wanted to tell him that it was all right, that he needn't worry about Annie ever coming down. And then the girl, she hears us, and comes out to us.

WELL, you couldn't blame him. She was one of those dark, voluptuous creatures you always think of with a red flower in their hair. Not a big girl, you understand, but one of the attractive sort. When she saw us, she screamed and ran out to the balcony. My friend, he spoke to her in Spanish, and she came back to us. They talked. She looked at me. I couldn't say a word. My friend says: "She says he is dying. Do you want to see him?" I said: "No, I couldn't. Tell her to tell him his wife sends her love." He repeated this to the girl, and she nodded and went in behind the screen. My friend said: "He don't know hardly any Spanish, and she can't speak English—I'll tell him." And he went in too, and left me out in the passage.

I heard them talking in a low tone for a minute, and then Oscar called out: "My God! Then she's come! Ah!" And there was silence. The girl, Chiquita, began to speak very fast in Spanish. The screen suddenly tumbled down as my friend stepped away from her, and I saw Oscar fallen back on the bed. I guess he was gone—then.

Mr. Stokes, the gentleman as brought me there, he said they must get the doctor quick, and he hurried away. The girl looks at the man on the bed, and then, after a long while, at me. And I guess she knew.

But there was nothing the doctor could do for him. Mr. Stokes, who was in the oil game down there, escorted me back to the ship, and I told him how Oscar's wife had disappeared and how the old people would appreciate it if his body could be sent up to them. He said he'd fix it. He was a real friend. He comes on board whenever we get to Cartagena and he happens to be there. He often goes up into the interior. There's a chance of him coming up with us this trip, on leave. Not that that has anything to do with this story I'm telling. . . . Well, I don't know. Of course he was interested. He says he's determined to find out all he can about me, and make sure what I say is true. I don't see why people want to worry so much about the truth, do you? You'd think they'd rest when they're happy. . . . What's that you say? Do I like him? Oh, I like him. I like the way he talks about widows. Says if he ever marries, it'll be an attractive widow with no nonsense about her. No, he's just a boy, as I see it. I humor him. Oh, nothing serious. With Annie's experience so close to me, you can understand I'll be careful in my own case. Still, you can't tell what you'll do in the future. Yes, madam, three bells is half-past five; and I must be going down now, if you'll excuse me.

GOSPEL SHOES

(Continued from page 47)

"It's a premature foal! Damn my coat-tails if it aint!"

"Yassuh, Major, li'l boy hawss, fo' fac! Done step' to town fo' a track record. Yassuh, some fast li'l baby! What's wrong, honey—kain't you reach yo' mammy?"

"Why, he can't stand up!" said the Major. "Knees wont hold him!"

Ash's huge hands were trying to help the newcomer to its feet. "Whut's the matter, honey lamb? Well, fo' Gawd's sake, ol' mare done foal a colt wif rubber laigs! Yassuh, they fold up like a ol' dollar-n'-a-half suitcase!"

Doc' Saunders came at noon to make a thorough inspection of the newcomer. He spat tobacco-juice all over the stall and finally rendered his verdict. "Leg-bones haven't had a chance to harden. That's the trouble with breeding to old mares. Blood lines are all right, but you need bone and muscle too. This colt is like a baby with the rickets. If you can figure out a way of feeding it, you might add barley and lime-water, but I don't see much use."

Doc' Saunders went on about his business, leaving the Judge and Ash Johnson contemplating the shivering, helpless foal of Aggie W.

The Judge straightened. "Well, Ash, we can't expect everything. Two out o' three is a powerful fine percentage. We'll need all our time fo' Certain and May Do."

"Yassuh, Major, but Ah figures me Ah kin hold 'em li'l rubber laigs wif ma hands while it eats—"

"See heah, Ash, I wont have you wasting yo' time—"

"Nawsuh, Major, wont waste no time, but Ah kin hold this li'l boy hawss up to its mammy an'—"

"No use—it's hopeless."

"Yo aint goin' call him 'at, Major?"

"Call him what?"

"Whut yo' jes' said—'Hopeless'?"

"H'm, hadn't thought about it, Ash—but why not? We've got Certain and May Do. Took inspiration and experienced judgment to name those two, Ash; but a blind man could call the turn on this colt. I'll register

him as *Hopeless*. No other name would describe him."

"But Major, suh, he got Supremus blood, and aint you always said—"

"Ash, don't you irritate me! An' don't waste yo' fool time with Hopeless. I'm staking my reputation and my lifelong hopes on Certain and May Do, and damn my coat-tails, Ash, I wouldn't be at all surprised to see them finish *one-two* in the Derby!"

"Well, fo' Gawd's sake!"

Major Jeff went over to Daniel Teague's establishment that evening to extend his compliments to his benefactor. He pounded his host on the back. "General Teague, suh! General Teague! All Fayette County is yo' debtor, General Teague."

Teague smiled. "Fair enough, Major. But I'm no general."

"By God, suh, you ought to be! Greatest contribution to the American turf in twenty years. Glorious foals, General Teague—colt and a filly, and except fo' their sex, you can't tell them apaht, suh! Could we repair to yo' library, General? I feel the need of a potent beverage fittingly to celebrate the occasion!"

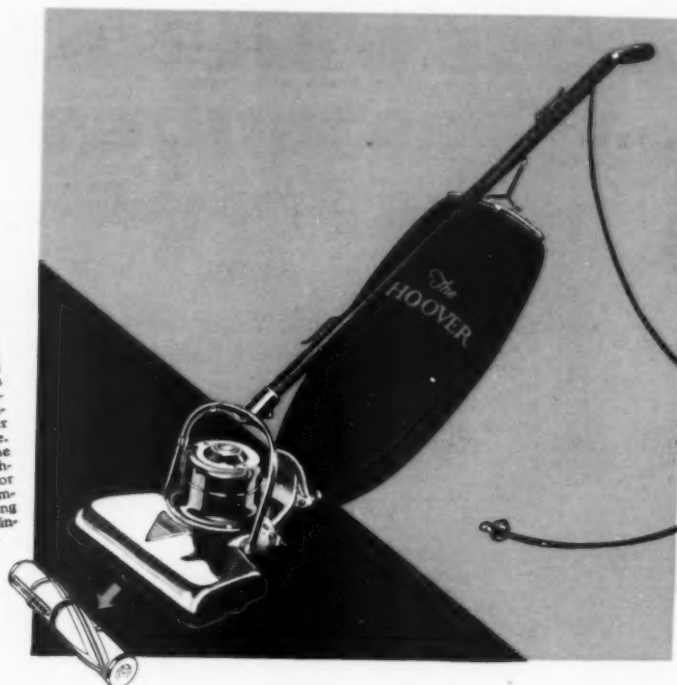
The New Yorker was nothing loath. But in undertaking to compete with the Major he was going outside his class. At two o'clock in the morning Teague's valet entered the library and rescued his master from under the table. Major Jeff, glass in hand, was still talking of Supremus and describing how the Derby would be run three years from now. The Major, in fact, was just getting into full stride. He finished that race all by himself. Literally and figuratively, *he walked home!*

DAWN was gilding Greenbow Hill when the Major, holding himself a trifle more erect than usual, unlatched the front gate and made his way, not without some difficulty, to the maternity-barn. He heard the voice of Ash raised for the first time in a nonreligious hymn. The negro was singing in a tone of sentimental conviction a popular ditty of the day:

"POSITIVE AGITATION"

A perfected principle in home cleaning science, sponsored by the world's oldest and largest maker of electric cleaners

"POSITIVE AGITATION" as accomplished in the new Hoover is beating—the time-tested requirement of thorough rug-cleaning—reduced to an exact scientific process. Such beating, instead of being concentrated in a few violent strokes as with the carpet-beater or broom, is modified by The Hoover into a series of swiftly repeated air-cushioned taps. This is achieved by means of a totally new appliance—the exclusive and patented Hoover Agitator illustrated here. Suction lifts the rug from the floor and floats the Agitator on a cushion of air while the Agitator gently flutters out all the embedded grit as the strong suction draws all the dirt in to the dust-tight bag.



It pays
to know the
difference between
The HOOVER
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OLD—old as housekeeping itself; yet new—new as tomorrow morning: this is "Positive Agitation" as embodied in the sensational new Hoover.

It is *beating*—the first essential of thorough rug-cleaning—of a sort hitherto unknown, rendered exact and positive by mechanical means.

This new Hoover floats the carpet or rug on a cushion of air, and then, in soft, swiftly repeated taps of instant pressure, vibrates it like a pennant in a breeze.

Nothing has ever resembled it. It is new, startling, revolutionary! It far surpasses even the

standard-design Hoover in these particulars:

- 1 For the first time, it makes possible "Positive Agitation" of floor coverings.
- 2 By actual test, in the ordinary cleaning time, it beats out and sweeps up from carpetings an average of 131% more dirt.
- 3 It is an even greater rug-saver; the oftener a carpet is cleaned with a Hoover the longer that carpet will wear.
- 4 It is virtually service-proof; every part, including the new motor, requiring no oiling.
- 5 It increases the efficiency of its remarkable dusting tools

because of its 50% stronger suction.

- 6 Its exclusive dust- and germ-proof bag is now washable.
- 7 Its form and finish are of startling beauty; and every new feature insures greater operating ease.

You owe it to yourself to see and understand this new Hoover, now being exhibited by Authorized Hoover Dealers. It is still only \$6.25 down, with the balance in easy monthly payments.

It represents the greatest single contribution to efficient home-keeping made in many years. You'll know why when you see it in action.

THE HOOVER COMPANY, NORTH CANTON, OHIO
The oldest and largest maker of electric cleaners • The Hoover is also made in Canada, at Hamilton, Ontario

The HOOVER
It BEATS ... as it Sweeps as it Cleans

Give *All* your teeth a square deal. *This brush does*

NOtooth consider this scientific brush. The way it is built is a guarantee that it will reach every tooth.

First there is the curved bristle surface. It curves the way your jaw curves. Next there is the big, cone-shaped end tuft. This makes those remote rear molars as accessible as your front teeth. And then you have a curved handle, curved so that it goes toward your teeth, making the Pro-phy-lac-tic one of the most comfortable brushes to use.



Sold in three sizes by all dealers in the United States, Canada and all over the world. Prices in the United States and Canada are: Pro-phy-lac-tic Adult, 50c; Pro-phy-lac-tic Small, 40c; Pro-phy-lac-tic Baby, 25c. Also made in three different bristle textures—hard, medium, and soft.



Always sold in the yellow box. Look for the hyphenated, facsimile word Pro-phy-lac-tic. This denotes the genuine.

*Yassuh, 'at's ma baby!
Nawssuh, don't mean maybel
Yassuh, 'at's ma baby love!*

The Major looked first in the stall of Winter Bells, but little Certain was helping himself to breakfast unattended. Nor was Ash in the quarters occupied by Queen's Token and her baby filly. The Major crossed to the stall of old Aggie W.

The big negro was sitting on the floor directly under a contented mother, and held firmly in his arms so that it could nurse in comfort was the tiny foal with the "rubber" legs.

THE Major tugged sternly at his mustache. "Ash, you black hunk o' worthlessness, what'd I tell you? You neglect yo' important duties, and I'll be constrained to fire you!"

"Nawssuh, Major—aint neglected nothin'. I gets me up at foah 'clock—"

"Four o'clock!" exclaimed the Major. "Ash, yo' lying!"

"Nawssuh! 'Is li'l boy hawss bawl so loud, Ah jes' natcherally has to get up and shet his face. Laigs aint no 'count a-tall, but—um, he sure know how to use his mouf two ways! Yassuh, drinks lak ol' fish, and yells lak gospel preacher. But as St. Paul say to the Pharisees—"

"Now, Ash, what St. Paul said wont be a circumstance to what I'll say to you, unless you move yo' stumps! Clean out all these stalls. General Teague is pressed fo' temporary quarters, and he's sending over some boarding mares and their foals."

"Says which? Well, brothers, will you pray for me! Yassuh, Major, Ah cleans me 'em stalls lak the good Lawd clean out the Temple soon's as I give this li'l boy hawss a alcohol rubbin'—"

The Major exploded. "Damn my coat-tails, Ash! If you possess any energy in that black carcass o' yours, I'd be powerfully obliged if you'd expend it in the direction of my convictions."

But he might just as well have been talking to the stone pillars that marked the entrance to Greenbow Hill. The advent of Hopeless had aroused sentiments in the breast of Ash Johnson that were quite as strong as the convictions of Major regarding Certain and May Do. In some mysterious manner the shuffling negro managed to perform all the additional duties consequent upon the addition of a dozen brood-mares and their nurslings. He neglected nothing, without apparently exerting himself, and he still found time to spend hours in the stall of old Aggie W.

"Evenin', li'l boy hawss! Time you was takin' yo' standin'-up exercises. Kain't neveh do nuffin, lyin' on floor 'at way. Brace yo'self, honey, and I hold 'em no-count laigs. One—two—and up you stands lak Methodist minister!"

Old Aggie W. snorted nervously as the baby thoroughbred tried with desperate courage to achieve its feet. And the time came when it could stand for a few minutes without help.

"Well, angels hover round!" breathed Ash. "Thank Gawd, 'at's ovah! Now, li'l boy hawss, see kin you learn how to perambulate."

But this proved a difficult task. Day after day the big negro got down on his hands and knees in the stall and went through a pantomime designed to teach Hopeless how to walk. Old Aggie W. watched them with grave concern.

"Honey, you put yo' laig out lak 'at, and you go *thump-thump-thump*, lak 'is! C'mon, li'l boy hawss, aint yo' 'shamed to have all 'em weanlings cuttin' didoes in the pasture, and you aint neveh yit been out'n yo' stall?"

The heart of little Hopeless was willing, but its flesh was weak. Ash had to keep

the foal undernourished and underfed, lest the weight of its body should prove too much for the fragile legs. Nevertheless one day at dusk the trembling colt managed to take four wobbly steps before it collapsed in the arms of its mentor.

Ash's jubilation knew no bounds. "Major suh, 'at li'l gospel colt done strut his stuff today. Yassuh, he walk foah short steps. He—"

The Major glared at his foreman. "Remarkable! Took four steps, did he? Remarkable, indeed! Permit me to inform you, Ash, the Derby distance is a *mile* and a *quarter* and Whisk Broom ran it in *two minutes flat*!"

"Well, bow down, mah people! He had gospel shoes on, didn't he, Major suh?"

"No, he didn't. He just had racing plates and propah care! And that's just what Certain is going to have, or I'll get a new foreman from General Teague."

The threat proved effective. Ash shuffled away in a hurry, and for several weeks he paid full attention to the Major's two best bets. It was just as well, for there were never two more promising weanlings in Fayette County than Certain and May Do. Each bore the forehead star and white stockings of their sire. Their lines were almost perfect, and they moved with the easy grace of equine aristocrats. Particularly was this noticeable when they paraded homeward at dusk from the pasture. It was at this time of day that Major Jeff and Ash Johnson plumbed the depths of a common understanding.

You remember Longfellow's lines:

Between the dusk and the daylight

When the night is beginning to lower

Comes a pause in the day's occupation

That is known as the children's hour.

Well, there was a "children's hour" on Greenbow Farm, and for years it had represented to the mistaken Major an outlet for his repressed emotions. Here was sentimental idealism, hope and love, and despair. The ceremony usually transpired about five o'clock, for it was then that the Major's baby thoroughbreds, tired of romping all day in the pasture, would begin gathering at the north gate, waiting for Ash Johnson to spank them and feed them and put them to bed. Like so many hungry and sleepy children, they wanted "in," and they announced the fact with shrill whinnies.

Groomed for the occasion, and with a fresh flower in the lapel of his black frock coat, the Major always left his house at this hour, and came in hand sauntered down to the north gate. From this point to the entrance of the great barn that served as a "dormitory" for the youngsters was a short parade lane, and here the Major took up his stand with a sort of "Bless you, my children" attitude.

When all was ready, Ash lowered the bars, clapped his hands and began marking time, *flap—flap—flap* in the dust with his enormous feet. His caressing voice intoned its orders: "Hi-yah, babies! Two by two, and watch yo' step. Take yo' pahntners and strut yo' stuff. 'At's right, children, *dolce-dol*! Salute the Major as you go by!"

And here they came! Kindergarten pupils of the sport of kings! Stepping along daintily, two by two, slim-limbed and fervent-eyed, revealing in their demeanor that they knew they had been born to the royal purple.

A stranger might well have experienced difficulty in telling one from another, but Major Jeff could see in each the distinguishing marks of blood-lines that dated clear back to Herod, Matchem and Eclipse—the thoroughbred trinity.

The kindergarten class moved on, Certain and May Do leading the way. These were the Major's future color-bearers, and each evening as they paraded by, pausing

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Give this Reward to Graduates

The Parker Duofold Pen and Pencil Duette

The most Popular Gift in the Stores Today for Birthdays,
Weddings, Leave-takings and Commencement

THE coming of vacation suggests to America that soon there'll be much writing home to do. And all who carry along the well-filled Parker Duofold Pen and Pencil will be the envy of those who are obliged to search at every stop for pen and ink—not the easiest of things to find in the woods, or at the lakes and seashore.

Therefore, gift-buying at this season naturally concentrates on these handsome Parker Duofold Duettes.

The Pen with point guaranteed 25 years if not misused, restful Hand-size Grip, and extra large ink capacity.

The Pencil with Non-Clog Feed

so easily filled by slipping in a new lead at the Tip—you need never take out the "insides."

It was Parker's idea that the world would richly reward whoever would produce such a writing team. And so it has proved—Parker sales in the past 4 years have increased 435%. People bought more than eight million dollars worth of Parkers last year alone. This year they're in higher popularity than ever.

Go and see the bright arrays of Parker Duofolds at all good pen and pencil counters. Rich Black and Gold or Black-tipped Lacquered—so handsome to own and hard to mislay.

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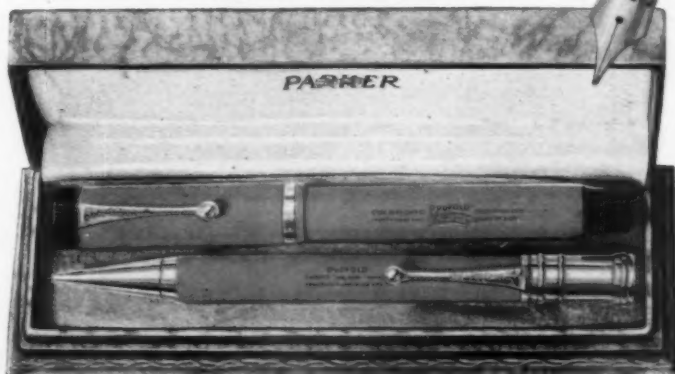
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Duofold Duette

PEN HAS THE 25 YEAR POINT

PENCIL TURNS LEAD OUT AND IN

Parker Duofold Duette: Over-size—Pen, \$7; Pencil, \$4; Junior size—Pen, \$5; Pencil, \$3.50; Lady size—Pen, \$5; Pencil, \$3; Satin-lined Gift Case de luxe included with sets



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No. 42—Gold Point. Fine ball point, gold plated. Writes like velvet. Suits 9 out of 10 people.

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an instant for the customary lump of sugar, the tall Kentuckian studied their development with proud eyes, confident at last that Supremus blood had given him the golden foal of his imagination, the unbeatable idol of the Kentucky turf.

Of course Hopeless never participated in that evening parade. Old Aggie's colt was the only one ever foaled on Greenbow Hill that was excluded from the "children's hour." While the others romped in the pasture, this unfortunate son of Optimus stood by the window of his stall, peering out wistfully at the green hills. He was now at the awkward age, and an ugly duckling if there ever was one: large knees, sprawly legs and an undernourished body. He wobbled rather than walked, and Ash Johnson, chuckling, told him: "Boy hawss, you's the best Charleston dancer in Fayette County. Yassuh, 'at's you!"

Gradually the fame of the Major's three yearlings spread through Fayette County. Major Jeff himself advertised Certain and May Do. The story of little Hopeless was related by Polly Pennington to Mrs. Tucker Mathews, who had a large heart, a double chin and a tongue like Tennyson's brook. Mrs. Mathews repeated the story before three women's clubs at Lexington, with the result that each Sunday thereafter saw an increasing number of women visitors at Greenbow Hill. They showed little interest in Certain and May Do, or even the Major. They all wanted to see and to pet the colt that was known as Hopeless, and to hear its flat-footed custodian singing: "Yassuh, 'at's ma baby—'at's ma baby love!"

The Major was exasperated. "Now, see heah, Ash! Yo' ruinin' the reputation o' this farm! I'm tryin' to identify Greenbow Hill as the home of a Derby winner, and by gad, every fool woman in Fayette County seems to think I'm runnin' a cross between a circus and a children's hospital. If this keeps up, I'll be constrained to fire both you and that colt. I'm sick o' darkies with flat feet and colts with dicky legs."

Ash sighed. "Yassuh, Major! Soon's our feet get rested, us is gwine drif' somewhere. Ah done tol' you 'at befo'. In the words o' Solomon, it takes a wise man to—"

"Ash! Shut yo' face!"

"Yassuh!"

SHREWD horsemen were beginning to take serious note of the Major's handsome pair of yearlings. Daniel Teague topped all offers with a bid of fifty thousand for Certain and May Do. The Major declined to sell at any figure, despite the advice of his friends. Colonel Masters even risked another battle.

"You old fool! Neveh right in yo' life, Jefferson, an' you neveh will be! Optimus was a sprinter, and his get will neveh go the Derby distance!"

The Major brandished his cane. "Yo' ignorance is deplorable, suh! Supremus was the greatest weight-packer o' all time, and he came from behind in all his races!"

"Supremus, yes!" countered the Colonel. "But you bred to Optimus, and they're the living spit o' their sire! Front runners, I tell you!"

"Damn my coat-tails!" roared the Major. "I've a notion to thrash you. Instead, suh, I'll control mysef and salute you from the winner's circle at Chu'chill Downs!"

Colonel Masters drew himself up to his full height of five feet two. "Jefferson, if you ever stand within that honorable circle, suh, it will be at the conclusion of a race fo' mules in which you were the only entry!"

Hotel attendants dragged them apart again. It was the last time they saw each other until Fate shuffled the cards one afternoon and began to deal smartly from either hand.

May Do, the satin-coated, fervent-eyed

daughter of Queen's Token, met instant death in a train-crash while being shipped to Belmont. On the same afternoon Certain, starting in a baby race, defeated a fast field in spectacular fashion. Colonel Masters effected a *rapprochement* with the owner of Greenbow Hill.

"My condolences, suh, and my congratulations. Of the two youngsters, I was inclined to fancy the filly. Was I correct in understanding from Miss Pennington you had lost still another animal?"

"Colonel, I'm unable to determine whether it's a loss or a blessing. Left my place for a few days, and when I come back, suh, I was shy one flat-footed, psalm-singin' ducky and a two-year-old colt named Hopeless out o' old Aggie W. Reckon they'll show up again befo' very long, because it's my conviction that nobody but an old fool like mysef would want to feed either one o' them."

BUT again the Major was wrong. Spring and summer passed, and the mystery of what had become of Ash Johnson and his baby love only deepened.

Polly Pennington made several efforts to find out, but Major Jeff was completely engrossed in the way the two-year-old son of Optimus and Winter Bells was bowling over his opponents at Lexington and Latonia. It appeared that the Major's lifelong dream was coming true.

Certain had developed into a "picture colt," a rich bay, with a fine head, expressive countenance and exquisite lines from ear-tip to tail. If he lacked anything, it was in the length between hip and hock, the development that frequently marks the difference between a sprinter and a stayer. It was because of this that Colonel Masters had branded the colt as an Optimus foal rather than a Supremus.

But handicappers and clockers, noting the way Certain captured most of the baby stakes, tabbed him as the best juvenile in the East, and when the winter books opened on the Derby, the son of Optimus got the call out of the long list of eligibles.

Polly Pennington was the first to call the Major's attention to the fact that the name of Hopeless was listed on the bookmakers' sheets.

"Jefferson, my dear, that isn't Aggie W.'s colt, is it?"

The Major snorted. "Damn my coat-tails, o' course it is! Ash is responsible fo' that! Fool ducky's gone crazy. He's takin' liberties with my name and reputation."

"You've heard from him, then?"

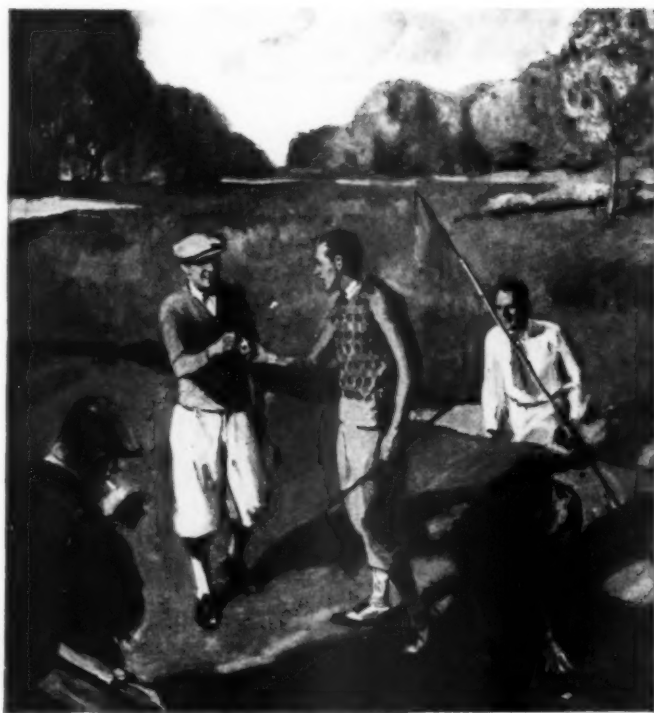
The Major tugged at his mustache and nodded. "Neveh thought Ash knew how to write, and after gettin' two letters from him, I'm convinced that he *can't*! Near as I can decipher it, he's on a bush track somewhere in Illinois, and he's running Hopeless under my colors. Says the colt's got gospel shoes, and he aims to start him in the Derby. You know, Polly, I should have shot that fellow a long time ago!"

But spring had come again before the Major encountered Ash at Churchill Downs. Meanwhile strange stories had begun to appear in racing papers concerning a "mystery colt" that was bobbing up every now and then in the jungle circuit accompanied by an old negro whose reply to all inquiries was: "Yassuh, 'at's ma baby!" The colt in question had never won a race, and clockers reported to their clients: "Wabbles all over the track and has shown nothing. *Hopeless* is right!"

Nevertheless, wherever the pair appeared there were fights among the railbirds, some of whom insisted that the negro had two colts just alike, and that he worked out one of them at four A. M. "Silver Dream" Charley was particularly insistent.

"*Sumpin* went by me in the dark this mornin' so fast it knocked me off the top

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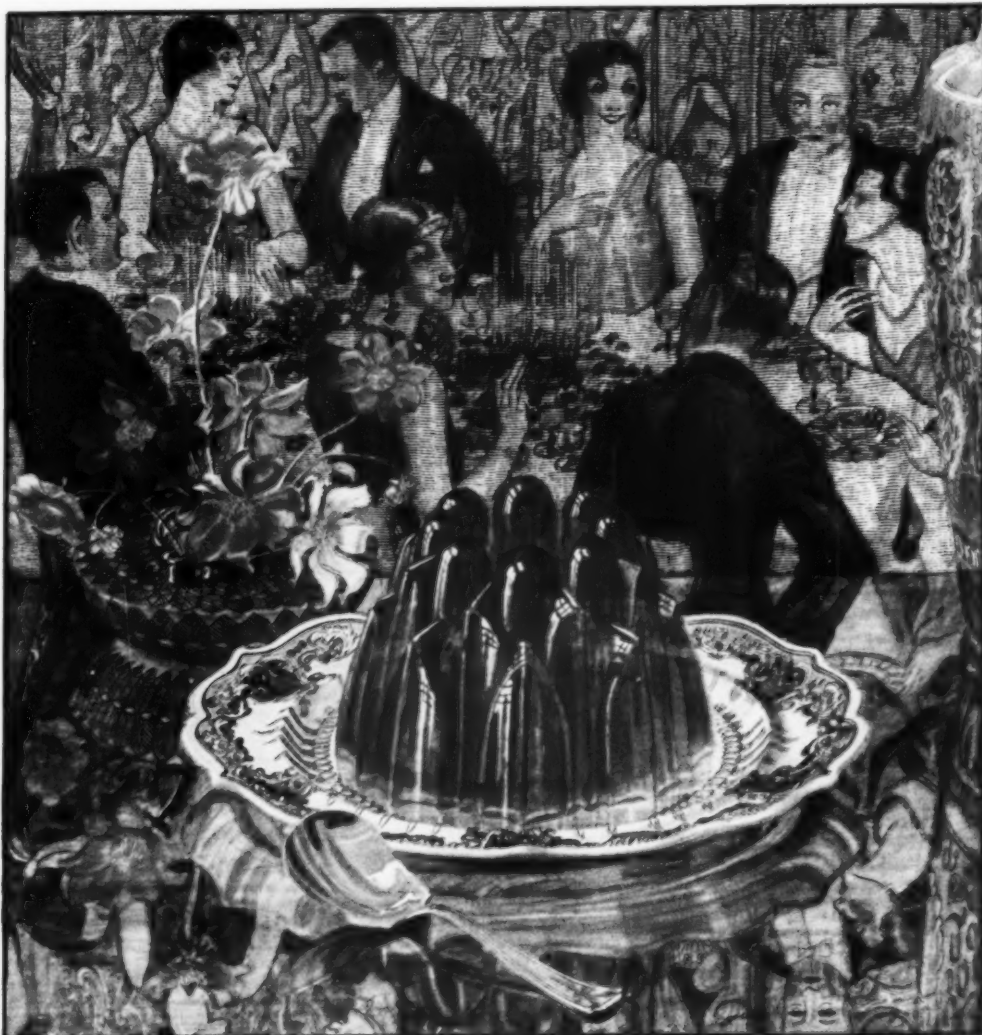
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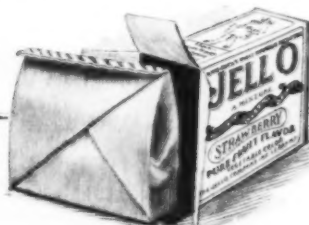


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rail and broke my watch. It was either that ducky's colt or a ghost, and a ghost don't leave hoofprints! I measured 'em with a tape, and I tell you right now there's *sumpin* on this track with a longer stride than Man o' War! *All right!* Call me a cock-eyed liar! I'm going to follow that gospel ducky till the snow flies, and I'll be dining at the Ritz when you poor hungry boobies are still chasing the rabbits in the center field."

The only fitting retort to this was the well-known raspberry, and Silver Dream Charley received his full share.

LOUISVILLE was filling up with the advance wave of the Derby Day flood. Owners and trainers had been on the ground for a week, and the hotel lobbies buzzed at night with the usual line of arguments. The race was only four days distant.

No man made a more appealing figure than Major Jefferson Wayne of Fayette County, Kentucky. But now that the hour for which he had lived was almost here, the hand of doubt was knocking softly at the door of his faith. The Major was a thoroughbred, and he strove not to listen. But his face was pale and his hands trembled.

Certain had been asked for the first time to go the full Derby route, and he had been beaten by two lengths after leading up to the mile. That settled it in the minds of many shrewd horsemen, though there were others who contended that the colt had not been correctly ridden, and that his staying powers would improve before the Derby.

Colonel Masters took the owner of Greenbow Hill aside. "Jefferson, as a fellow-citizen o' Fayette County, I intend to support yo' colors, suh! But you have my sympathy in advance, and kindly remember, Major, that I advised you to sell—"

"Damnation, suh! I don't desire yo' sympathy or yo' advice! I told you, Colonel Masters, that I'd salute you from the winner's circle, and my convictions are undisturbed, suh!"

Nevertheless he did not sleep at all that night. At five o'clock in the morning he was at the track, fussing around the stall of his idol and muttering to himself: "He *does* look like Optimus! Never have been right 'bout anything in my life. But I live in hopes! Damn my coat-tails, I live in hopes!"

The quick thud of flying hoofs sounded on the track, and the great Montgomery colt—Don Domo—flashed past, working the mile in thirty-eight and fighting for his head. Delighted railbirds shrieked encouragement:

"G'wan, you baby! Let him roll, boy! Let him roll! There's your Derby bet! There's your mile-an'-a-quarter horse! He'll be runnin' over 'em all at the end! Who's gonna beat him?"

Who indeed? A shadow crossed the face of Major Jefferson Wayne, but he straightened his shoulders defiantly. "If Supremus were alive!" said he. "If Supremus—" He paused, his attention caught by the familiar strains of a gospel hymn:

*Didn't ma Lawd deliver Daniel?
D'liver Daniel? D'liver Daniel?
Didn't ma Lawd deliver Daniel?
An' why not every man?*

The Major opened the stall door and glanced out. A flat-footed psalm-singer was trudging placidly along the shaded lane that led from the north entrance, and behind him moved a blanketed colt of tremendous size and bone.

The negro glimpsed the frock-coated figure of his employer.

"Well, bow down, my people! *Whoa, hawss!* Mornin', Major suh! We heah at las'. As the Good Book say—"

The Major's face was a study, but there

was no mistaking the emotion in his voice. "Ash, you—you black hunk o' worthlessness! How the hell are you? Where you been all this time?"

Ash sighed plaintively and wiped the perspiration from his forehead. "Been usin' our feet, Major suh! 'At's all Ah know. Been usin' our feet, 'stead o' restin' 'em! Seems like 'em old gospel shoes—"

"Ash, don't trifle with my patience! Whose colt you got there?"

The negro's jaw dropped. "*Whose colt?* Well, fo' Gawd's sake! Aint nothin' else but your colt, Major!" With a quick movement he stripped off the blanket, revealing the one-time ugly duckling of Greenbow Hill. "Yassuh," he crooned, "at's ma baby. . . . 'At's ma baby love!"

Hopeless flung up his head and stared challenging eyes at the near-by quarter-pole as three more Derby contenders went thundering by, exercise boys crouched low and rating their mounts under double wraps.

Major Jeff's trembling fingers tugged at his mustache. He stepped back and through the half-closed eyes of a connoisseur studied the lines of old Aggie's foal, the wabbly-legged colt he had once branded as "hopeless."

This son of Optimus was nearer to a chestnut than a real bay, and the rich color-tone heightened his massive appearance. He stood well over sixteen hands high and must have scaled close to twelve hundred pounds.

But what impressed his owner instantly was the beauty of the shoulders, the perfect middle-piece, and the tremendous quarters, with the muscles running low into the gaskins. It had been an effort for this colt to walk—a hard, desperate effort; and the result was evident in the tremendous muscles that rippled under their satin covering. The beautiful neck was well crested, and in the luminous eyes, set well apart, was the flame of desire, the pent-up heritage of imprisoned youth.

Ash broke the silence. "Full o' run as a ol' hydrant. 'At boy hawss been holdin' hisse'f back 'bout long nuff!"

But the Major had seen something else. Slowly and reverently he removed his hat. "*Supremus!*" he breathed. "Supremus all over again! By gad, Ash, if he's as good as he looks—no, it aint possible! Don't tell me he can run!"

Ash looked about him, and perceived that a number of inquisitive hustlers, including Silver Dream Charley, had followed him through the gate and were loitering within earshot.

"Major suh, Ah aint tellin' nobuddy nuthin', but Ah aims to wuk this colt out in 'bout an hour, and folks kin judge fo' themselves. As Solomon say about the prophets—"

"Ash!"

"Scuse me, Major! Ah'll put this boy hawss in his stall right now so's Ah kin rest ma feet. Um—they is sure tired!"

WORD went around the track that the "mystery colt" from the bushes had shown up accompanied by his "gospel nigger." Clockers strolled in the direction of the Major's barn, and when Ash sent the colt out, under the guidance of Bubbles Jackson, almost every hustler on the track was on hand to watch the workout. A smart performance on the part of Hopeless would have sent the odds tumbling in every pool-room in the country. More than that, the descendant of Supremus would have gone to the barrier with every opposing jockey in the race warned in advance to look out, not alone for the three-year-old Certain, but also for his running-companion, the ugly duckling of Greenbow Hill.

But the performance of Hopeless that morning brought no thrill to the talent, caused no shift in the advance betting. Ash Johnson had quite apparently allowed sentiment to get the better of his judgment.



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Bubbles Jackson, smart as a fox, black as a pirate's past and no bigger than a soda-cracker, was on the back of the huge chestnut. He took the track, jogged the colt a sixteenth and "busted" him at the quarter-pole. Twenty watches snapped as Hopeless lunged into his stride and came on, Bubbles riding like a frog, and Ash Johnson, down by the rail, waving him on.

"Yassuh, 'at's ma baby! Send him along, li'l black boy! Let him down, kid! Us is headed fo' the heavenly shore!"

But Ash Johnson was alone in his enthusiasm. Hopeless negotiated the mile in reasonably fast time, but experienced eyes had no trouble in discerning a glaring fault. The son of Optimus floundered badly in his stride, and Bubbles couldn't make him run true.

"Wabbles all over the track," said "Biscuit Billy," dean of the split-second gentry. "Never seen a horse more off balance. Must come from a country where they build their tracks on the side of a hill. Well, we live and learn. Major, when are you going to work Certain?"

Major Jeff, pale from the shock of a great disappointment, raised his head.

"Promptly, suh! Promptly! Ash, just as soon as you have cooled out Hopeless, oblige me by bringing out the winner o' the Derby."

"Says which, Major?"

"Bring out Certain, you black imbecile!"

"Yassuh, reckon 'at's a good plan."

The handsome son of Winter Bells and Optimus electrified the onlookers by reeling off a dazzling mile in thirty-nine, well under control all the way. Better still, he showed a disposition to go on. It was the most impressive work of the day, and Major Jeff's confidence was restored. Once more the lobbies buzzed with arguments over the Greenbow Hill entry.

The Major saw no need of a running-companion for his favored colt, but Ash Johnson, crying like a child, got down on his rheumatic knees and created such a scene that the tall Kentuckian was compelled to yield.

"Major, suh, 'at boy colt got Supremes blood. You said it yo'se'f! Mo' hawsses in 'at ol' field better it is fo' the front-runners. You kin declare to win wif Certain, Major; then us kin use Hopeless any way we wants. Big hawss, Major, an' mebbe he can keep 'em other colts from interfering with Certain."

"Ash, that three-year-old wabbles too much. He can't run."

"Might run in the Derby, Major! Might be jes' like sinner at a camp-meeting. Might get his gospel shoes, and the Good Book say—"

"Ash, you can start that colt, but if you open yo' mouth on the Bible again, I shall open the pearly gates fo' you myself!"

"Yassuh, Major! Brothers, will you pray for me! Sisters, will you pray for me! Children, will you—"

"Hell's fire!" shouted the Major fiercely. "Shut yo' face!"

To Ash's credit let the fact be recorded that he said not another word until the field was actually at the post in the Derby, a squirming, twisting wall of color, crumpling and re-forming under a flawless sky at Churchill Downs.

Bands! Bunting! Flags! Massed thousands that packed the stands and darkened the infield! Fortunes swaying in the balance! The upraised wand of Midas! A hush of expectancy that blanketed all the noise and confusion, and finally the commanding voice of Marse Kennedy from the starting platform:

"Don't get tied in, Neil! Take back and come up slowly.... Spread out more.... That's right. Now, get that Seven horse out of that mess! Get him out, I tell you! Bring that Whitney colt over here. Easy, Bill, don't get killed! Hold it, Johnny!

Pull up! *No! No! No!* Get back, all of you, and come up again. Slow on the outside. Step up, Five. Easy—easy! Keep that line and walk up!"

The Montgomery colt, foaming and frantic, threatened to smear the whole line, but "Hold-on Jimmy," assistant starter, clung to the bridle like a bulldog, his heels digging into the dirt, and the whole weight of his body employed in the struggle. Others of the ground-crew risked their lives, darting in and out, coaxing, threatening, whipping laggards into line.

Again the voice of the starter: "Take back with Number Seven—take him back! Now, step up on the outside.... Bill, get hold of that crazy colt by the head, and swing him! Swing him! That's it! Straighten out in the middle! Move up, Lanny! Move—*You're off! Get away! Get away!*"

The barrier flashed up, liberating a wave of color that surged forward to the accompaniment of a dull roar from the gathered thousands. The race was on!

TO Major Jefferson Wayne of Fayette County, watching the struggle from a box in the grandstand, it must have all seemed very much like a dream. He was aware that Polly Pennington was standing at his right, and that old Colonel Masters, excited and profane, was at his left, but their voices seemed detached and far away. The Major, through his glasses, was beholding the apparent fulfillment of his lifelong hope. His colors were out in front, leading the Derby field.

In that all-important rush from the barrier, the horse that broke on top was the fleet-footed son of Winter Bells and Optimus. The field of fifteen horses came sweeping past the stands for the first time like a whirlwind, all the early speed in the race concentrated in a desperate and unsuccessful attempt to take the pace away from the Greenbow Hill entry. Certain led the way by a neck, closely pressed by Lord Valiant and the crack colt Freebooter. At the first turn, Certain drew clear by a length, took the rail, and assumed definite command. A great cheer went up from the Fayette County contingent. The colt was running beautifully, and the boy on his back was urging him on, apparently intent upon piling up a lead while he had a chance. The field strung out, and then the colors began to shift like a kaleidoscope. Freebooter and Lord Valiant dropped back, and the imported colt Tarmac, from which much was expected, raced to the front and challenged Certain. Chick Donlin, who was piloting the son of Optimus, let out a wrap, and the pair of leaders increased the terrific pace. At the three-quarters, Tarmac weakened and fell back, amid wild outcries of jubilation from the stands.

Out of the second division rushed War Sergeant, closely followed by Normandy Prince, winner of the Belmont Cup. Others began to work their way to the front. But it was not until the great Montgomery colt Don Domo made his move that the crowd got its first great thrill. Don Domo had been back in sixth place all the way, with the boy on his back rating him intelligently. As they reached the far turn, his rider tried to go through on the rail, but found the path blocked. He took back, went around the tiring Dan Jr. and gave Don Domo his head. The Montgomery wonder responded instantly, moving up on the outside with a terrific rush that defied opposition. One after another, the leaders cracked under his challenge, until there remained only Certain, still flying along in front with a two-length advantage.

The gap between the pair closed at the mile post. The crowd went wild. Chick Donlin drew whip, revealing that Certain was facing the duel with a faint heart. With

What about Cancer?



THE SHAM MYSTIC

Scattered all over the country are cruel impostors who claim to have the ability to cure cancer.

The old Indian woman who pretends to heal by occult rites is less dangerous than the crooked institutions and individual practitioners who advertise that their secret knowledge and mysterious "treatments" will cure this dread disease.

THERE is good news about cancer. In many instances it can be prevented and if treated in its early stages it can be eradicated. Sometimes it can be successfully removed, even when it has progressed beyond the early stages. It does not break out in another place when the removal is complete.

A cancer in the body is like a weed in a garden. It begins in one spot as a small growth. Get rid of it immediately and *entirely*.

Not Hereditary—Not Contagious

Do not imagine that because someone in your family died of cancer, you are doomed. In some families the tendency toward cancer seems to be hereditary, but the disease itself is not.

Cancer is not contagious. To avoid those who are suffering from this disease is as stupid as it is cruel. There is not a single authenticated record of any person having contracted the disease through association with a patient.

Be on the watch for the first signs of cancer. Do not neglect any strange growth. Be suspicious of all abnormal lumps or swellings or sores that refuse to heal. Look out for moles, old scars, birthmarks or warts that change in shape, appearance or size. Ill-fitting dental plates, jagged or broken teeth may cause cancer. Continued irritation of any part of the body is often the beginning of trouble.

The failure of internal organs to function normally, or an unusual discharge from any part of the body may be a sign of cancer.

Above All—Act Promptly!

The greatest scientists of the world, though they have searched for years and are still searching, have not found a serum to prevent cancer or drugs to cure it. The great victories have come from surgery, X-rays or radium.

If you suspect cancer do not wait, thinking that the trouble will clear up. Do not wait for pain. In the beginning there is no pain.

Spread the good news about cancer—how it can be recognized in its early stages—how to get rid of it. Help to save lives.

Almost as many people over 40 die of cancer as of pneumonia, tuberculosis and typhoid fever combined. If—and when—cancer is successfully brought under control, the cost of life insurance will be reduced.

By dealing openly and frankly with cancer, by learning to recognize first symptoms, by acting promptly when

it is discovered and, most important, by having thorough physical examinations annually or oftener, the cancer death rate can be materially reduced.

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Write for this attractive folder giving details of the Carryola Models



still a quarter-mile to go, the sprinter had been caught! The Greenbow favorite might last it out, but it would take courage—courage!

Colonel Masters yelled through the din: "Damn that Northern horse! He's a runnin' fool! Jefferson, yo' boy has tossed off the race! Yo' horse is curlin' up! Told you to sell him! Hell and brimstone, where's yo' Supremus blood! C'mon with something else! Beat that Northern horse! Damnation, I'll get out there myself!"

BUT Major Jeff heard not a word. Polly Pennington's trembling fingers pressed his arm in sympathy. He did not realize her touch. Tall and erect and silent, he faced the oncoming field, and around him the roar of excited thousands proclaimed that the Montgomery colors had taken the lead at the head of the stretch. Certain had done his best, and it was not enough. The Major had made another mistake.

Meanwhile, no one had been paying any attention to a little colored boy on the back of a huge chestnut that also carried the colors of the Greenbow Stables. Bubbles was in a tangle when the barrier went up, and for the first quarter of a mile Hopeless trailed the entire field, half hidden in the dust. Then when the duel began between the leaders, none except those in the press-box and the judges' stand saw what was happening in the second division.

Presiding Judge Nealon, dean of the Kentucky turf, was the first to note an amazing development. "Hello!" said he. "What's that thing coming up on the outside? Look at that stride! Look at it! Ninth! ... Eighth! ... Seventh! ... Sixth! Good Lord, what is it?"

Associate judges leveled their glasses at a blur of color, now skimming the rail at the far turn and rapidly overhauling the flying leaders.

"Other half of the Greenbow Hill entry," said Davidson, "—that bush colt, Hopeless. Why, I thought he was a wabblar—"

"Wabblar, hell!" said Judge Nealon. "True as an arrow, and he's going three jumps to their one! Fifth, now! There he goes after War Knight. Look at him turn loose! Gentlemen, this is going to be a race!"

The crowd had now awakened to the new challenger, but the gathered thousands were slow to identify him. They only knew that a superthrill was at hand. Certain had cracked under the marvelous rush of Don Domo. The Montgomery colt was on the rail, a length in front of his field. Now something had come out of nowhere! Something was going to nail the great Don Domo! The roar of Kentucky rent the skies. The crowd arose as one man!

Down they came, Don Domo on the rail, and at his side, hooded and bandaged, moved the ugly duckling of Greenbow Hill, the golden foal of the Major's dream. Bubbles Jackson, head down, was spread out like a frog. Small arms and legs moved in perfect unison with the terrific stride of the oncoming chestnut—a stride such as even the Kentucky turf had never seen! They hung there a moment, fighting it out, and in the babel no voice could be distinguished, not even the shrill cries of an old negro down by the rail: "Yassuh! 'At's ma baby! 'At's ma baby love!"

Then Hopeless drew clear, lunging desperately ahead—and under the winner's wire flashed the pride of Fayette County, the new prince-elect of Churchill Downs!

ONCE more a fingernail moon smiled down on the blue grass region. In Lexington a torchlight procession was being formed to go out to Greenbow Hill and do honor to its owner. The Major had an early visitor in the person of Polly Pennington, who had called to offer her congratulations. They sat on the sheltered

porch, discussing once more the great event. For the first time in his life the Major was embarrassed. Honors had been thrust on him, and he felt that he did not deserve them.

"What I can't understand," said Miss Pennington, "is why the colt wobbled so badly in his workouts, and ran so marvelously in the race."

The Major elevated one eyebrow and tapped a boot-tip thoughtfully with his cane. "My dear, I reckon I'll have to raise Ash's pay. He wouldn't tell me about it until after the race, but it appears like he worked that colt in different-weighted boots. He put a heavy shoe on the left front foot and a light one on the right, and reversed the process on the hind feet. No wonder the colt wobbled. Of course, when no one was looking, he trained the colt in gospel shoes."

"Gospel shoes?" inquired Miss Polly.

"Racing plates, my dear. Finest of the fine! You know, Polly, Ash is a marvelous ducky!"

A silence fell between them. Down the road the lights of the oncoming procession twinkled jubilantly. The air was warm and perfumed, and romance rode with the fire-flies.

Major Jefferson sighed. Old desires were strong upon him. "Well, Polly, my dear, a gentleman must be pardoned fo' his mistakes. I seem to have made mo' than my share. Never have been right 'bout anything, and damn my coat-tails, I've given up hope. Felt powerfully sure I was going to win you some day, Polly—but I see I'm wrong. Beautiful and lovely woman, my dear. I'd get down on my knees right now to propose once mo', but I realize the futility o' my ambition. In that conclusion at least, I'm right!"

In the darkness he could not see that Miss Pennington's eyes were moist and her lips trembling, nor that the color had been mounting in her cheeks. Impulsively she reached out and placed a small hand in that of her persistent suitor.

"On the contrary, Major," she whispered. "You are wrong again."

The Major flung away his cane and stood up, his arms extended.

"Polly!"

"Jefferson!"

Down the road sounded the distant strains of a band playing "Hail to the Chief!" Nearer by, the crickets chirped gleefully, and Ash Johnson sat outside the stall of a Derby winner, picking at a battered banjo and chanting placidly:

Yassuh, 'at's ma baby!

Nawssuh, don't mean maybe.

Yassuh, 'at's ma baby love!

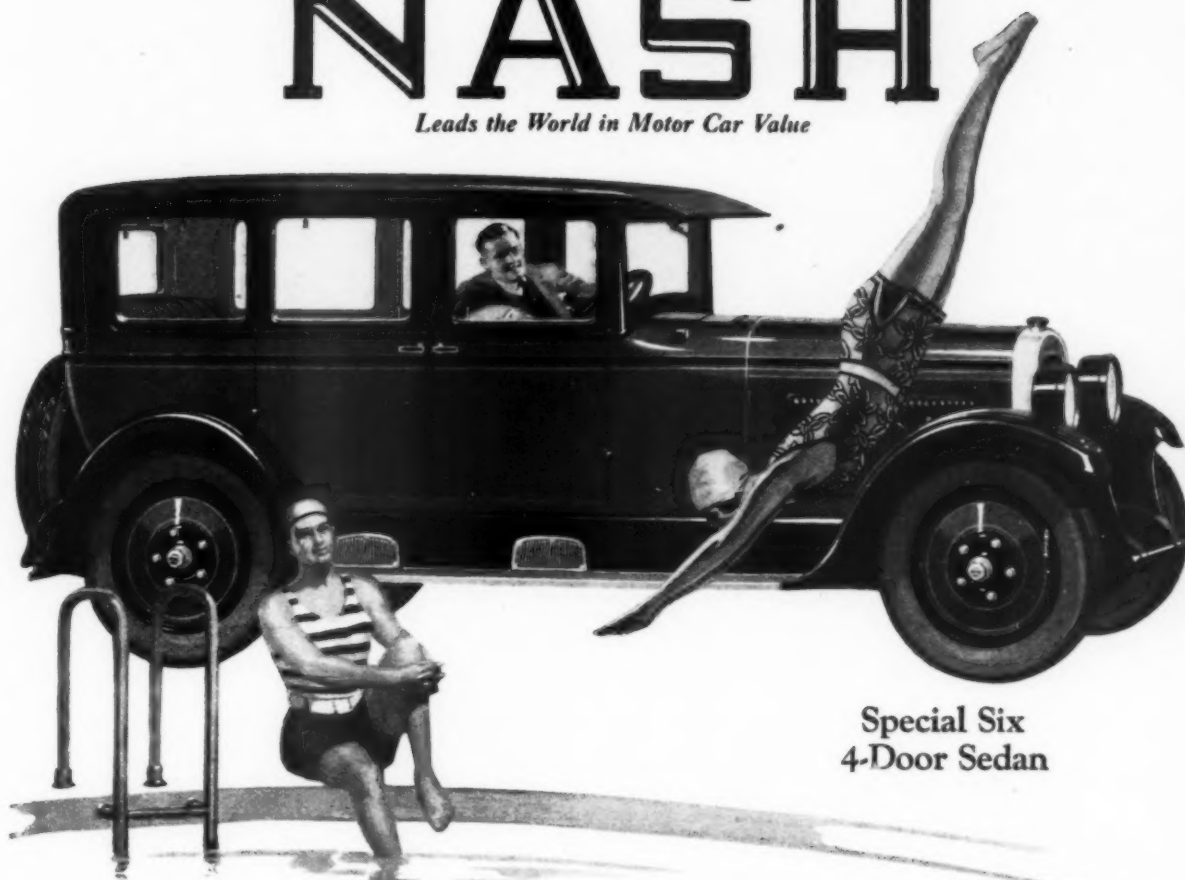
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ALSO IN CAKE OR CREAM

DOUGH

(Continued from page 61)

an army! He was a flight of swallows in the springtime! A flaming girdle circling the world!

Into the broad basin of Krainburg! Pausing at times to work for food to help the frail body. Twisting the heavy wine-presses; hewing coal at Steinbrück, where the great coal seams rear out of the earth; toiling in the quicksilver mines of Idria, where they gather the metallic mercury in sheepskin bags. And the word *America* whipped him ever onward when his immediate needs were satisfied.

He saw the sea, and his soul spurred him spitefully. He came to Trieste, where big ships roll in and out, the salt of the Seven Seas glued to their wave-flogged flanks. And there Louis Kellermann learned the meaning of the word *America*. They told him that it was a place, a country, a paradise!

Seven months later Louis Kellermann landed at the Battery from an Ellis Island ferryboat.

NOW the slogan which Louis Kellermann adopted when he made his first theatrical venture in a dark little hutch on the Bowery was, possibly, suggested by the frightening drama that had taken place during his childhood in the little village above Klagenfurt. He printed it clumsily on a piece of cardboard and tacked it above the pine table in the pill-box that he called his office. The slogan read: "CROWDS ARE DOUGH."

The phrase had nothing to do with the bodily construction of crowds. It related solely to the plastic possibilities of their emotions. Louis Kellermann used the clumsy artists that he employed in those early days as a modeler uses his tools. His frail body had stethoscopic qualities. It detected the faintest murmur of applause, fed the murmur, quickened it, magnified it till it became a Niagara of sound.

Louis sent his first profits to the mother with the green mole. The letter was returned through the Dead Letter Office. The envelope carried a penciled scrawl to inform the sender that the lady had passed on to a world where kronen were not needed. How she met her death Louis Kellermann could not discover.

The rise of Kellermann can be best described by telling of the development of the cardboard sign that carried the words: "CROWDS ARE DOUGH." This homemade text was replaced by a gayly lettered one executed by a card-writer on Fourteenth Street. Prosperity swept this away, replacing it with a glass sign on which the words were gilded. Two years later, when the Kellermann Syndicate took over five theaters in one week, the slogan was cut in solid brass to hang above Louis' desk. Then, when Louis took his weak body and his great ambitions into the splendid offices overlooking Broadway, an "artcraft" guild carved the words in silver and placed them on a base of shining ebony. A truly magnificent work that wrecked a thousand-dollar bill. No change in the wording. Just: "CROWDS ARE DOUGH."

And here, in the splendid office, Louis Kellermann saw daily during the hot noons of late summer that hellish film of childhood. The minute detail of the film puzzled Louis. He could see the village square as plainly as he could see, at other moments, the illuminated sign on the other side of Broadway. He could see the yellowing leaves of the chestnut trees from beneath which his mother, himself and the collar-chafed bear walked into the picture. It was all limned with devilish cleverness.

He would watch the slow-witted peasants

gather, see the first attack on the bear, see again the dreadful forward movement of the mob. In flashing succession came the flight down the poplar-lined road, the appearance of the black-bearded ogre with the club, the killing of the bear, the wild race to the farmyard of the evil-faced man whose slaves he and his mother became.

THERE came a day when the clerk in the anteroom made a blunder. He admitted a colleague of Louis Kellermann while Louis was still in that semi-hypnotic state necessary for the passing of the film. A close colleague—a man named David Grober, who had attached himself to Kellermann years before and had risen with the strange genius from the province of Carinthia.

A clever fellow was this Grober. He had little black eyes that never winked, and he had a soft purring manner that would have been useful in a confessional.

Grober apologized hurriedly and started to back out, but Louis Kellermann, with a great effort, dragged himself back into wakefulness and bade him stay. Then, with a wave of his hand, he dismissed the prim secretary.

"Why—why did you start to go away?" questioned Louis.

"Well," began Grober, his black eyes probing the face of the other, "I—I just thought that you were thinking of something and that you wouldn't like to be disturbed."

There was a moment's silence then Louis Kellermann put another question. "Did you imagine it was something pleasant or something unpleasant?" he asked. Now he would settle the tormenting question which plagued him after the daily abstractions. Could Miss MacGrew, his secretary, read anything from his face?

"If I spoke the truth, I should say it was decidedly unpleasant," answered Grober. "Just for a moment I thought the Chicago house had burned down. Yes, and the Detroit joint too."

Louis Kellermann leaned forward in his chair. He knew Grober. Grober was loyal. Clever, too. Years before prosperity came to Louis Kellermann, this Grober had seen that the young Austrian was the star to which he would tie his pushcart. For all the world knows that David Grober owned a pushcart when he first became acquainted with Louis Kellermann.

"I will tell you something, David," said Louis, softly; "each day I am tormented by a—by a vision of something that happened when I was very small. It was something that was not nice. It drives me mad when I see the whole happening again—see it as if it were taking place before my window."

David Grober nodded his head. The black eyes were not lidded for an instant. His face wore the unshocked look of the true confessor.

"It was something dreadful," continued Louis Kellermann. "It is strange how it appears to me day after day. It makes me physically ill."

"I understand," said Grober quietly.

"I cannot keep the damnable thing away!" cried Kellermann, rising from his chair. "It drags my mind from the most engrossing task. It's devilish! You—you came in when the thing had just gripped me. By an effort I broke loose from it, but it will come back. In these—in these days of late summer I cannot dodge it. You see, it happened in late summer."

GROBER rubbed his bald head with his stubby fingers and spoke. "Louis," he began, "did you ever take any stock in these fellows that go in for psycho-analysis?"

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Do You Still Send Her Flowers?

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Say it with Flowers

No? Well, I went to one of them. You see, I was always dreaming of a chap; so—well, I went to one of those psycho-analysts out of curiosity."

Grober paused, shifted his position, then went on doggedly.

"This psycho-analyst talked a lot of stuff that I didn't understand—a lot of stuff with big words in it. But I got the drift of his arguments. And it hit me. That was curious. I mean the reasons he gave for the things that trouble us were in my case the right reasons. And I believe they'd fit most every other case. This bird said that these things—I mean the things that trouble us—were just like bills that we'd left unpaid. Just like bills. No matter if it was an affair with a woman, or any other old thing. I mean that when you study everything, it gets down to something like a bill. Don't you think so, Louis? Don't you think so now? There's a demand put to you some way or somehow, and if you don't pay, it's going to trouble you. Well, I went and settled with that man that was always troubling my sleep. He had tricked me five years before I ever saw you, and I hadn't paid him for the trick. See? It was an unpaid bill."

"What did you do?" asked Louis Kellermann.

"I bought up all his notes and put him in the Bankruptcy Court," snapped Grober. "Since then I haven't dreamed of him at all. I wish you'd go and see one of those fellows, Louis. One of the psycho-analysts, I mean. He might tell you what is wrong. You might have left some bill unpaid. Not in money, but in something else. I'm going now. I just stepped in to tell you that I saw Ranger about that first act, and he's coming right up to talk to you. Good-by."

Louis Kellermann sat staring out into Broadway after David Grober left the office. He repeated the words of his friend: "You might have left some bill unpaid."

After a long period of quiet he reached for the morning paper and consulted the list of European sailings. Grober was right. In every happening of life one is either a debtor or a creditor.

LOUIS KELLERMANN'S powerful car roared through Klagenfurt, swept through the little village of Rückersdorf, crossed the Drave, and turned up the mountain road over which the boy Louis had walked in the long ago when the word "America" made music like unto silver bugles blown by elves on hill-tops. A different Louis now: an exquisite, possibly the best dressed man in the whole of Austria.

The car lunged up an incline, slackened speed at a signal from the great producer, and finally came to a stop before a blackened ruin that had once been the farm where Louis Kellermann and his mother had obtained shelter from the pursuing crowd.

Louis descended from the car. He stepped cautiously to the farm gate, white hands clenched, a strange wave of memories flooding his mind. He paused and peered into the yard.

Fire had done a thorough job. The farmhouse and the outbuildings had been completely destroyed. Everything inflammable had vanished; only the stone walls, smoke-smear and heat-pocked, remained.

A toothless hag came weaving up the road as Louis Kellermann stood before the crumbling walls. The great overlord of the American stage addressed her in her own tongue. He lied gracefully to get the story. He had once passed that way, years and years ago. He was but a child. A lean man, and a woman with a green mole on her face had given him milk. Where had they gone?

The hag became suddenly news-proud. She dropped her bundle and words streamed

through her unpegged gums. She had a story to tell. A great story.

The New York chauffeur listened, but he could not understand. Louis Kellermann was glad that he had brought an American chauffeur, very glad. If the fellow had understood what the hag said, he might have guessed that the story affected his master in a way that suggested a closer intimacy with the couple who lived on the farm.

IT was a story of tragedy: One day in the summer, years ago, when the hag herself was strong, the lean man had died in great pain—in terrible pain. The old woman described his death-agonies minutely. He had rolled on his bed like a crippled snake on an ant-heap.

The mind of Louis Kellermann recalled the dreadful *Beuschel* and the poisonous *Krenfleisch*. He remembered how the fellow had wallowed in dishes that were hatching grounds for bacteria.

"I suppose it was something he ate?" he observed, making an effort to shut off the hag's flood of detail.

"Ah, yes!" screamed the story-teller, a grin of delight on her lined face. "Something he ate! Ha, ha! For his last meal before the pains seized him he ate *gulyás*. Good *gulyás*. That will not poison a man. It is but beef and paprika! It is good! No, no, I have eaten *gulyás* for seventy years. Listen to me!"

Louis Kellermann moistened his lips. He felt a little afraid. His supersensitive body sensed the horror of the tale.

"The folk in the village thought the woman was a witch," cried the hag. "They always thought so. Always. She had a green mole on the left side of her face. On the left side, mind you, and that is the devil's mark. Ay, ay, the devil's mark! And years and years ago she came onto the village square with a bear that did a dance that made people afraid. It was a dance that the demons do in the pit. Ay, ay! And she fed the bear on the flesh of children, so they say."

She paused and looked at Louis Kellermann to note the effect of her story. What luck was hers! Here on the road she had found a rich foreigner who expressed a desire to hear the story of the farmhouse.

"Go on!" snapped Louis Kellermann. "Tell me the rest!"

The hag took a great breath and gasped out the ending of her tale. "The village folk came up this road on the night he died!" she cried. "Hundreds and hundreds of them! Men, women and children! I saw them! I tell you I saw it all! I ran along with them! They carried torches and flaming brands, and they sang songs. Songs about witches! They said the woman with the green mole on her left cheek—the devil's mark, mind you—they said that she had poisoned the man! Yes, they did! They marched up the road to this farm, and they set fire to the house! Ay, ay! And she was inside! They danced around it! I saw it all! It's a great story, isn't it? Give me some kronen! Pay me for telling it to you. I am poor and old! You are rich! And it's a great story! Give! More! More!"

THE village was *en fête*. The square was bedecked with small flags. Four old musicians sat in an improvised stand and made music to which the young danced languidly. The soft hush of the summer afternoon was upon the place. The chestnut trees were yellowing; there was an odor of hot dust, of perspiration.

The shining car of Louis Kellermann slipped quietly onto the square and halted in the shade of the chestnut trees. The chauffeur turned to his master for instructions, and receiving none, he shut off the engine and stared at the dancers.

Louis Kellermann looked with slitted eyes at the square. He felt extremely weak and fragile, yet—and this was curious—he knew that he had the strength of armies. A strange strength! It pulsed through him. The tips of his white fingers throbbed with the energy he possessed.

In the group that gathered to examine the car was a slim youth with a bright, keen face. Louis Kellermann beckoned him. The lad came to the side of the car, and the theatrical magnate questioned him. Why the fête?

The youth explained. It was a *fête patronale*—a fête to commemorate the birthday of the saint who guarded the village.

In the hurried, guttural speech that he spoke in the old days Louis Kellermann asked further questions. Why the old men in the band? Why did the dancing lag? Were there no better musicians?

There were better musicians, explained the boy. A Zingani quartet had come from Grafenstein under the impression that they would be hired for the day, but they demanded more than the village could pay. They were musicians, though! Mother of Mercy, yes! They could play souls out of hell!

Louis Kellermann smiled softly. He reached for a dispatch-case at his feet and took from it a roll of bank-notes that startled the boy.

"Find the players!" ordered Louis. "Pay them what they ask. Tell them to start at once. Come back to me when you have found them. I will hire you for the afternoon. Be quick!"

The youth was alert. Inside five minutes the old men were ejected from the music stand, and the quartet had taken their places. A little buzz of wonder ran across the square. Folk stared at the shining car, at the elegantly clothed and foreign-looking man who sat within it.

The quartet had youth and strength. They understood that Louis Kellermann was their patron. They bowed to Louis, and he returned their greeting with a slight inclination of his head. He didn't smile. He waited to hear them play. So much depended on their playing. So much!

The quartet played, and through the fragile body of Louis Kellermann there surged a great wave of joy. The youth had spoken the truth. The four musicians from Grafenstein could play souls out of hell. Ay, or play them into hell!

The maddening wails of the violins swept up the narrow side-streets and called to home-staying people. They came clumping down the cobbled paths.

NOW the supple fingers of the musicians painted things on the air—things that the thickening dance crowd saw: towers white and wonderful; dream castles on cliffs; yellow deserts with green-eyed sphinxes; vermilion-tinted cities; seductive music that made dreams in hot brains—dreams of rivers of wine, of pleasure gardens.

The violins wailed of love and hate. Strains from a strange instrument, shaped like a ukulele, pecked continuously at the brains of the dancers—pecked like a ghostly jackdaw, disturbing, maddening.

The odor of lavender came from the hills where the big bees rolled in the strong tussocks, and each puff of wind brought the tang of herbs—strange herbs that old women sought and stewed into witchlike draughts for prospective mothers who desired lusty babes.

The whimper of madness ran across the square. Centuries back, this grape-time carnival had been a pagan festival; then the church absorbed it. Now the wailing violins, like musical mice, gnawed at the girdle that held the paunch of pleasure.

"Wine!" shouted Louis Kellermann. "Wine for the dancers!"



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The owner of the café and his strong helpers rolled squat barrels of wine onto the square. Fat-bellied glasses with strong stems of green and yellow flashed as the sun-lances crept through the chestnut trees and pricked them cunningly. There rose the clashing of cups, the gurgle of Styrian wine. Shouts and laughter. The stamping of heavy boots. And above all, the wailing of the violins. Above all! Like hot wires that skewered dull brains and toasted them in the flames of passion.

On went the dance. Girls came running in from the hillside, barelegged girls who had been tending goats. Breathless, with heaving bosoms, they stood for a moment on the edge of the milling dancers; then the straining violins swept them up.

The *curé* of the village came at a run down the steep street leading to the church. Some one had told him that a madness had seized his flock. He shouldered his way across the square, the half-crazed dancers buffeting him. A tall man, this *curé*, eyes deep-sunken, but blazing with indignation as he rushed to the glittering car in which sat Louis Kellermann.

The questions of the *curé* fought with the shouts and laughter, with the startled squeals of women, and the maddening music of the violins. Angry questions. Who was he, demanded the *curé*. Why was he there? What right had he to drive the people insane?

And Louis Kellermann, smiling softly, answered him by uttering the slogan that was cut in silver in the splendid offices overlooking Broadway. "Crowds are dough!" he shouted. "I've proved it again! Crowds are dough!"

The indignant *curé* turned to the dancers. He tried to get the attention of the drunken mob that swirled past him. "This man is an agent of the Prince of Darkness!" he screamed. "Beware before it is too late!"

FEW of them heard. Some repeated the words with slobbering laughter. "An agent of the Prince of Darkness!" they gurgled. "Ay, he is the Prince of Darkness himself! Was there ever such music in the village? Such wine for nothing? Such dancing?"

They caromed into the *curé*, swept him forward, an ascetic chip on the floodtide of passion, beaching him amongst the half-palsied oldsters whose brittle legs jerked with desire but whose physical strength was insufficient.

With fat, music-maddened hours the afternoon rolled along. Louis Kellermann watched with half-closed eyes. The drama was moving under its own momentum. The wine and the pricking violins had turned the affair into a saturnalia.

Thoughts of a climax came into the mind of Louis Kellermann. There had to be a climax, a fitting climax. And things that were big, really big, bred their own climaxes. Louis had discovered this fact through reading many manuscripts. If the 'script opened with batteries and thundered along, page after page, there was always a fitting climax. And this affair on the village square had opened with batteries—pounding batteries that increased with each passing minute.

A pretty girl, with a blood-red shawl about her shoulders, dropped exhausted. Stumbling, drunken men carried her out of the riot. They splashed wine in her face till she sat up and gasped. Louis Kellermann watched her, and as he watched, the climax he sought came in sight—came with a suddenness that startled Louis.

The sweetheart of the girl, a tall, powerful young man, stooped to lift her to her feet; but as he stooped, he was thrust aside by a man bigger and stronger, a man whose face brought back to Louis Kellermann the episode of that day when his mother, him-

self and the collar-chafed bear had marched onto the square. The fellow was the image of the black-bearded ogre who had led the pursuit and who had killed the bear at the corner of the road.

It couldn't be the ogre! Impossible! The ogre, if he was still alive, would be an old, old man. Forty years had passed since that day of terror.

As the black-bearded brute swept the girl back into the dance, Louis Kellermann beckoned the youth who acted as his messenger. He shouted questions, and the youth screamed his answers. The father of Black-beard was dead. Ah, yes, he had been big and black like the son. And he had been a very strong man. They told a story in the village of how the father, when young, had slain with a club a demon bear that a woman had brought to the village—a bear that ate the flesh of babies.

Louis Kellermann could hardly control himself. With gestures he commanded more wine. Wine for the dancers! A fig for the spigots! Knock the tops from the barrels and let the thirsty dip! Let the jilted lover and his friends drink! Drink deeply! Wine would heal the scars of Cupid!

The lover and his friends drank, and murder crept onto the square. It hid in the shadows of the chestnut trees, but the sensitive body of Louis Kellermann felt its presence.

The noise increased. The tall sweetheart of the jade with the blood-red shawl was mobilizing his friends. He gesticulated wildly, pointing to Black-beard, who, holding the girl in his great arms, careered around the square like a mad stallion. The fellow had become the spirit of unholy force. Dancers fled from his path. Men cursed him as he buffeted them; women squealed as he brushed them roughly out of his way.

To Louis Kellermann the fellow was the original ogre. He became curiously convinced that the brute dancing with the giggling girl was the man who had killed the bear, the man who had led the villagers to the farmhouse and burned it while his mother was within. What had Grober said? Ah, yes! Grober had said: "You might have left some bill unpaid."

Louis Kellermann took a grip on himself. Dreadfully fragile was he, but he knew that crowds are dough. And he could mold crowds! He could make them laugh and cry! He could make them curse and scream. He could make them kill if he wished. . . .

Kellermann signaled the big brute to the side of the car. Black-beard swelled with conceit. He roared out answers to the questions that the rich stranger put to him. Ay, his father had killed a demon bear that ate the flesh of children! A terrible bear! It was owned by a witch who had a green mole on her left cheek. The devil's mark was the mole. His father had led the villagers to her house and burned her alive. His father himself had fired the place.

Thus he bragged. And he, like his father, was the strongest man in the village. He also could kill a bear. He could do anything. He had taken the prettiest girl in the village from her lover, and the lover was afraid of him.

He gripped the great car with his powerful hands and shook it. "I drove a car in the war!" he shouted. "The car of a general. If I had this machine, I'd take my girl to Klagenfurt tonight. Ay, tonight!"

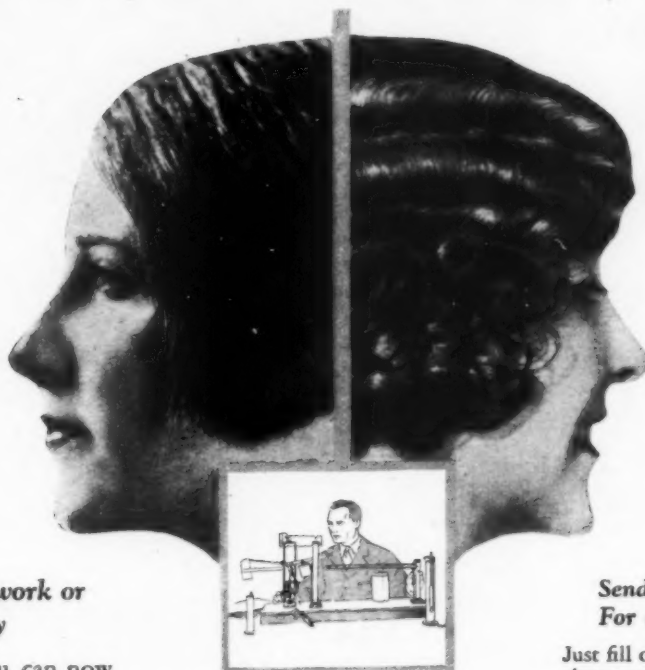
The wench grinned up at him and snuggled against him. Black-beard laughed, gathered her up in his arms and leaped back into the dance.

"Get my things out of the car!" Louis Kellermann ordered his chauffeur. "Quick!"

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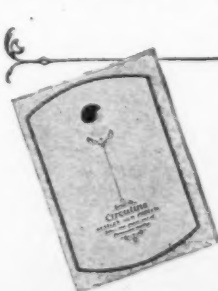
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He slipped from the car as Black-beard and the girl staggered against it. He whispered a word into the ear of the ogre. With a bow the theatrical magnate pointed to the car.

For a moment the black-bearded brute stood irresolute. Then he understood. He was offered the car. It was his for the time being. He could take the girl to Klagenfurt. He could laugh at the fools who milled around him, the light of murder in their eyes. He clambered into the car and dragged the girl to his side!

The huge machine sprang forward. It rushed beneath the chestnut trees. It thundered down the poplar-trimmed road.

It was Louis Kellermann who uttered the cry of pursuit—the cry that the father of Black-beard had uttered when the woman with the green mole on her left cheek had fled the square forty years before. "The path!" screamed Louis Kellermann, his voice hardly recognizable to himself. "The path! You'll catch him at the elbow of the road!"

Louis Kellermann saw the crowd turn as it had turned on that day long ago, the happenings of which he had salted down in the bitter brine of memory. The mob stumbled down the cut-off, and murder ran like a whimpering hound before their clumping feet.

Louis Kellermann leaped to the stone wall that surrounded the square and looked down the dark hillside; an exultant Kellermann at that moment! He was staging the grand finale that his soul hungered for. He was paying the bill!

The headlights of the car plaited a strand

of blazing silver through the poplar trees. Their rays rushed forward like questing spears and lit the elbow of the road, the elbow where the bear had died. And there the fight began.

UP the hillside came the sounds of battle. The mob had barricaded the road. There came shrieks and curses and yells of pain. The lights of the car showed fragments of the fight—fleeing fragments—and Louis Kellermann had momentary views of Black-beard. A devil of a fighter was Black-beard. Again and again the wave of assailants swept over him. Again and again he reappeared, gigantic in the glare of the headlights.

The fight became a general riot. A bright genius fired the car. The flames lit up a scene that was appalling. Black-beard was forgotten. Three score small battles were in progress around the burning machine. Louis Kellermann saw the tall curé stumbling down the hillside, screaming threats and prayers as he ran.

The chauffeur roused Louis Kellermann from the sweet trance brought about by the vision. "I think we had better get away before that bunch comes back," said the chauffeur. "I don't think they'll like us when they sober up. The car is gone, but I've found out that there is a road over the hills down to Klagenfurt. I think we had better beat it."

On that night tramp over the lavender-scented hills Louis Kellermann made one remark that puzzled the chauffeur. "Well, anyway, I won't be sick tomorrow," said he.

THE FAR-AWAY GIRL

(Continued from page 71)

glimmer of a starving dusk, the woods opened like a trap and let him out into a sad place where amid the linked chain of gleaming beaver-pools there stood a smothered, weedy, earthy cabin on the roof of which smoke stood like a tall gray man. A feverish and drowsy light winked above the swamp-grass in its window.

Before he came up to its door, Laird brushed panic from his face, dusted the pine bark from his hair and shoulders, tightened his slenderness to the last hole of a high studded belt, and assuming the swagger of a horseman, he strode across that solitary clearing and knocked.

THE light winked out. Inside—a silence that seemed to his suspense to breathe hoarsely. He knocked again, thunderingly, then flung wide the door. He stepped into a smoky, turfy, acrid darkness, warm and odorless of human life, and as the door went shut violently behind him, the world fell on his head; and if to be stretched unconscious is to be at ease, Laird made himself at home.

When he got open a pair of leaden eyelids, he saw lantern-light and faces and a recently doused fire. He shut them away, being preoccupied by a sensation as of a large iron bar being thrust through his head at regular intervals. When this was mitigated to flying arrows, he managed to drag his attention from it and again opened the windows of objective experience.

There sat at a table, gulping coffee, a woman, harder of face and breast and hand than Laird had believed a woman could be. She was staring at him as though he were an animal incapable of reciprocal observation. Under the insulting detachment of this gaze Laird realized that he lay tied along a heavy log-built bench, and that his money had been taken from his shirt. At that, he began to curse. A big man, standing over him, whiskered and very dirty, spat on the floor and set his hands on his hips as though leisurely contemplating a bad boy

preparing for deliberate later punishment. A smaller man, twitching himself about the room like a dry leaf in a fretful wind, and nervously munching with toothless jaws, stopped and swore. The woman set down her cup, wiped her mouth with her left hand and mincing over to Laird, slapped him repeatedly across the face. Having tried in vain to catch her hard coffee-smelling fingers in his teeth, Laird burst into tears. His pride burned deeper than his skin.

"Now, you be good, kid," she said, patted him on the shoulder and returned to her drink.

The big man laughed, not noisily.

"Where's your hoss?" he demanded. He had to kick Laird's ankle-bone expertly before the prisoner understood that the question was meant for him.

"I lost him—quicksand."

"Sinking River, uh? We're goin' to kill you, see?"

Laird snarled: "My father will smoke you out and shoot you down like rats."

"Will, eh? Who's your pa?"

"MacDougal. You've heard of him. You've seen Lazy-O stock, unless you've been living underground—"

"Pa's a cattle-king, eh?"

"He'll hang you to the nearest cottonwood."

"Will, eh? What, fer a no-account run-away mail-order cowboy like you? He's got some real honest-to-God boys at home—glad to see your finish, likely."

"I'm his only son. I tell you, he'll scour the country for me. He'll hunt you out—"

"Um-hum!" The speaker turned to his companions. "Told you he was worth keepin'! What'll Pa pay down for your pretty white hide and larkspur eyes, eh, sonny?"

Then Laird knew he'd played the fool again, and swallowing his shame, lay still and tried to think. The arrows still interfered, though less frequently now.

"You write the letter to MacDougal, Het."

"I'll write it," said the small nervous man in a very high, sweet voice.



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All three of them wrote it, in a knot about the table, and he of the tenor voice read it aloud to Laird.

"Dear Mr. MacDougal—" ("Dougal Valley man, aint he?" "Yes.") "We've got your son here safe and sound. Send fifty thousand dollars cash by the messenger and you'll get him back, as is. If messenger don't show up here with money in two weeks," ("You kin make Dougal in that, Jim, barrin' accidents?" "Sure thing," said Jim), "we'll break the kid's right arm."

"That'll sort of allow for accidental delays," said the reader meditatively.

"If he aint here at the end of seventeen days, we'll break the left arm, and so on till the end of the month. After that, we'll strangle him and drop him into a handy bog. Is your kid's life worth the money? Yes or No? Now, son, just add a line in your own fist, sayin' as how you think we means it."

"I don't," murmured Laird, his dreamer's eyes possessed by a half-amused, half-horrified incredulity.

"I'll hev to show you, then," said Jim, and bending back an arm until pride vanished and the victim screamed aloud, he held it as in a vise, Laird writhing impotently. "One inch further back, kid, and then, we hit it with a crowbar—here."

LAIRD fainted. They were not impressed by his collapse, and were talking quietly together when he returned to their society. The small man then brought him paper and a stub of pencil.

Looking up into that narrow face, fine-featured, with very still and long-lashed eyes, Laird knew to a full sick consciousness the experience of fear. He cringed and wrote obediently.

"They'll do what they say, Father. Better send money—Laird."

His "d" trailed off faintly. He wanted to add a word of loyalty, of love, of a fool's remorse, but the dictation was complete.

Jim was to be the messenger and the other man went out to set him on his way and to give him some final secret warning or advice. When their steps had gone into the dark, the woman came close to Laird. He could not help wincing down from her so that she laughed.

"I aint a-goin' to smack you," she reassured him. "I done that for effect. I want to get away with your cash, see? If I carry you with me,—there's two horses,—will you see me through to Squaw? You're handy with a gun, aint you? I aim to quit these guys. If I drop in at your pa's ranch some day," she whined, "will you do the handsome by me?"

Laird vowed the vow of prisoners and slaves.

He was free; he ate hurriedly, but oh, how rapturously; he was mounted, he was riding as he had never ridden before in all his swift-galloping young life, under branches and through water, the horrible woman running like a shadow or a pale hound just ahead of him, on a trail she seemed to know.

On the hill above Squaw, at their next untroubled noon, she left him to follow a crossroad to some mysterious destination of her own, and with a surprising generosity she gave him some of his own money and a kiss.

"See you again one of these days, Larkspur-eyes. So long."

In spite of his shamed gratitude, the woman lived in his nightmares as a witch, and twitching and muttering in his sleep, he ran repeatedly his strange, dreadful journey with her, as a lost soul rides on Valpurgis Night. . . .

He should not be far now from his journey's end. He lay at Squaw for a week, recovering from headache, starvation, shock and a sprained arm. And from

Squaw he sent a telegram of warning and of reassurance to his father. It was no small satisfaction to know that Jim, so expert at arm-breaking, was riding day by summer day toward the entrance of a trap.

The leafy aspens, opening and closing like Grecian dancing-girls, about flowering mountain-meadows, made his new journey as happy as a song. He had spent his last dollar on a solid horse, and rode as one rides to the tune of bells. There was a fairy anticipation, a feeling—shivery and ecstatic, like the aspen leaf-shadows—of a shy sly presence, a peering little Pan. And the girl was—just beyond. Her distance was no blue or hazy dream; she lay crowned with forget-me-nots somewhere in the green immediate grass.

His heart stopped when he recognized the two sentinel Norway firs—Todd's name and another encircled by Valentine symbols and arrow-pierced—black and distorted as it should have been only by the passage of years; so, thought youth, will Nature silently rebuke an imbecility. Yes, there was the sudden silver trail by a brisk stream. He rode up slowly, his hand against his throat.

The round meadow opened, as Todd had opened it for his fancy, as perfectly round as a bowl; and there, all smothered in meadow grass and flowers, lay the little low old smoky cabin, sound asleep. His horse's hoofs came closer noiselessly to the closed door. But there was a low voice singing within.

Laird slid from the saddle. His hands were cold. He drew himself up, breathed deep, and gently, resolutely knocked.

The low droning music stopped; footsteps came slowly; the door opened.

The figure within the threshold danced before Laird's eyes—a little old woman, erect and rosy with crinkled gray eyes bright as dewdrops upon a heap of withered leaves. Laird's hungry dreamer's gaze went searching.

"I've come to see Miss Linda Garnett," he said, "with a message from an old friend."

The woman smiled, her faded lips running into her cheeks.

"I used to be Linda Garnett," she said. "I've been married to Mark Weston now for a matter of fifty years. Who is the old friend, sonny?"

"Todd," murmured Laird, mist filling the visible world.

"Why, bless his heart! He remembers me? He come here courtin'—most sixty years ago."

Laird drooped against the door-post and laid his hand across his eyes. It is not easy to laugh to that particular tune at one-and-twenty.

HE stayed with the old couple for a vague and wistful fortnight. Before he left—but it would not be by the way he came, though that, they said, was probably the shortest, but by a slow safe chain of highroads and a railroad journey—he told her the legend of her beauty.

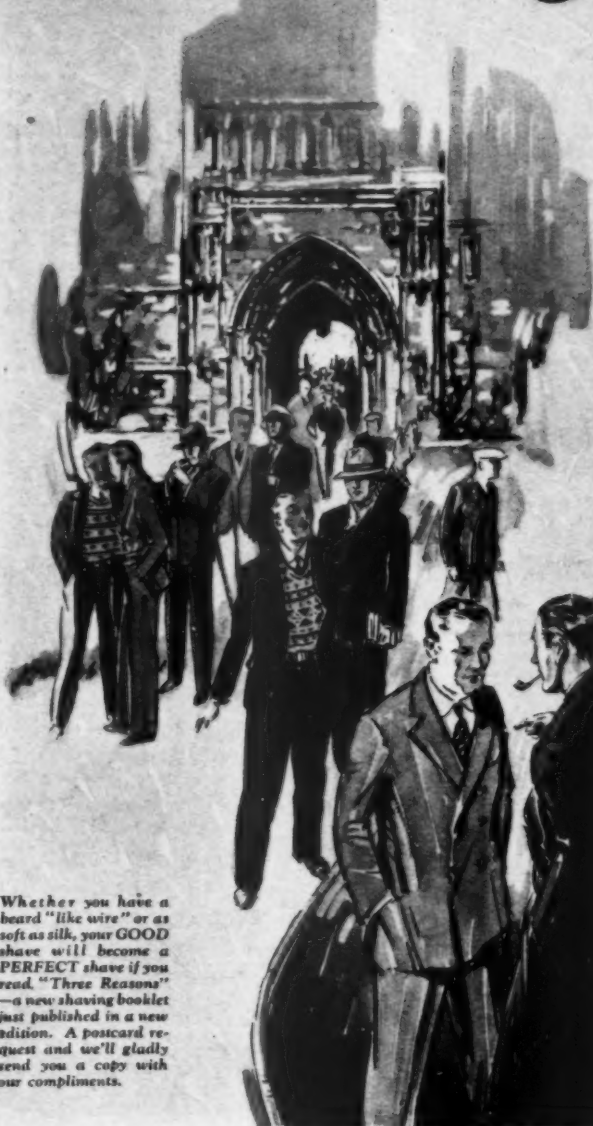
She blushed. "I used to be that pretty—almost," she admitted, "but I never was anything to compare to a little granddaughter of mine who they did say looked like me. My daughter stopped here with her man and that little girl on their way yonder—" Toward Laird's hills she gestured. "She had them cute gilt eyelashes and big gray eyes—so true, so straight and shinin'. And hair, black, sort of cloudy. She'd sing, most, when she talked. Bless her! She'd be seventeen by now."

"Where has she gone to?" muttered Laird, and his heart labored again to the bagpipe skirling of a sudden hope.

"Why, she'd be at Dougal—Dorothy would; Dossie, we called her—Dossie Blair."

Laird plunged away from her. Dossie—Dossie Blair— Her eyes were

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gray; they had sparkled for him. That small grave red mouth; once he had kissed it carelessly. Not very often had he made it run out to its long caressing smile. And the voice of singing water, how she had said it, wistfully, thrilling his blood.

But Dossie Blair— There were other men less blind, less distance-dazzled there at Dougal, and they were looking, asking. There were Dewey and Sam and Ollie Ray. He'd go back quickly; what were quicksands, murderers or thieves in the urgent path of love?

The old folks let him borrow another horse and packed it for him. He'd be coming back to them some day, and perhaps he'd bring with him their darling.

"Have a good journey, Laird. Be careful. Come gain."

"Look out for Sinking River," advised old Mark. "I've given you sure landmarks for the one safe ford. That horse of mine, he's sure a dandy in the water; he can't sink."

AT a sunset hour Laird came back to Dougal. Gaunt, wild, unshaven and bright-eyed, he flung himself over Blair's bars and called aloud: "Oh, Dossie! Dossie Blair!"

When she stood, silent and uncertain, in her doorway, he was afraid that she might move or smile to spoil her beauty; but when she did smile with a betraying glory of recognition, then, for the first time perhaps in the history of a MacDougal, the eyes of flesh and mind and spirit opened simultaneously, and Laird knew what Beauty meant.

THE DANCE

(Continued from page 43)

And Marie Bannerman told a lot of girls that they'd had a row, and she was scared of what he'd do."

Again an awed silence.

"That's the craziest thing I ever heard!" some one said again.

"Charley Kincaid!"

The narrator waited a moment. Then he added:

"He caught her kissing Joe Cable—"

I couldn't keep silence a minute longer.

"What about it?" I cried out. "I was with him at the time. He wasn't—he wasn't angry at all."

They looked at me, their faces startled, confused, unhappy. Suddenly the footsteps of several men sounded loud through the ballroom, and a moment later Charley Kincaid, his face dead white, came out the front door between the Sheriff and another man. Crossing the porch quickly, they descended the steps and disappeared in the darkness. A moment later there was the sound of a starting car.

When an instant later far away down the road I heard the eerie scream of an ambulance, I got up desperately and called to my escort, who formed part of the whispering group.

"I've got to go," I said. "I can't stand this. Either take me home or I'll find a place in another car." Reluctantly he shouldered my clubs—the sight of them made me realize that I now couldn't leave on Monday after all—and followed me down the steps just as the black body of the ambulance curved in at the gate—a ghastly shadow on the bright, starry night.

THE situation, after the first wild surmises, the first burst of unreasoning loyalty to Charley Kincaid, had died away, was outlined by the Davis Courier and by most of the State newspapers in this fashion: Marie Bannerman died in the women's dressing-room of the Davis Country Club from the effects of a shot fired at close quarters from a revolver just after eleven forty-five o'clock on Saturday night. Many persons had heard



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Statement of the Ownership, Management, Circulation, etc., Required by the Act of Congress August 24, 1912, of THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE, published monthly Chicago, Illinois, for April 1, 1926.

State of Illinois, County of Cook, ss.

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Charles M. Richter, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of The Red Book Magazine and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 445, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, The Consolidated Magazines Corporation, 1912, North American Bldg., Chicago, Ill.; Editor, Karl Edwin Harriman, North American Bldg., Chicago, Ill.; Managing Editor, None.

Business Manager, Charles M. Richter, North American Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

2. That the owners are: (Give names and addresses of individual owners, or if a corporation give the name of the corporation and the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of the total amount of stock.) Louis Eckstein, North American Bldg., Chicago, Ill.; Estate of Louis M. Stummer, North American Bldg., Chicago, Ill.; Benjamin J. Rosenthal, North American Bldg., Chicago, Ill.; Stephen Hexter, North American Bldg., Chicago, Ill.; A. R. Stummer, North American Bldg., Chicago, Ill.; Charles M. Richter, North American Bldg., Chicago, Ill.; Ralph K. Strassman, 33 W. 42nd St., New York City.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of the stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs, containing statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustee, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest, direct or indirect, in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the six months preceding the date shown above is: (This information is required from daily publications only.) CHARLES M. RICHTER, Business Manager. Sworn to and subscribed before me this 23rd day of March, 1926. [Seal.] LOUIS H. KERBER, JR.

Dear Fred

Tomorrow is our eighth wedding anniversary — haven't the years flown by! How care-free we were, how hopefully we started out just eight years ago! You were going to work so hard and get ahead so fast, remember?

You have worked hard. I've seen the tired worried lines in your face that prove it. And I've worked hard too, since the children came — worked to make the same old salary enough for the four of us, worked to make one dollar carry the burden of two.

Understand, dear, I'm not complaining. I'm not thinking about me — I'm thinking about you. Often I've wondered, lying awake at night, why some of the men we know have gone ahead while you haven't — men who haven't any more brains and aren't half as nice as you. Remember that first disappointment when Joe Edwards was made assistant to the president? You wanted that promotion, and you were ahead of Joe. But they told you that he had the all-round training you lacked.

Dearest, it's gone on a long time now. You come home tired at night, and there are bills to pay, and we have a scene, and you say you "simply must make more money" — and then you never seem to do anything about it. "Can't something be done?" I want to help you succeed while we are still young. Isn't there a way?

Your loving wife,

Helen



Letters wives don't write to their unsuccessful husbands

ON your desk, or in your heart, is the picture of your real employer—the woman for whom you work. She is your partner, but she is also your judge. She knows better than anyone else whether you have lived up to your real possibilities.

Whether you are rich or poor, you will never get a letter from *your* wife like the letter above. That is the wonderful thing about women. They take quietly and cheerfully the things we men would get hot under the collar about.

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the feeling deep down inside yourself.

Are you going to disappoint the faith that some one has in you? You owe it to her to give one evening's serious thought to the Alexander Hamilton Institute. You know in a general way of the Institute's work; how it has trained many thousands of men like you for bigger success, how it has proved its power time and time again in their business lives. But have you ever found out what part the Institute can play in *your* life?

The Institute will do just this for you: thru its Modern Business Course and Service it will give you a thorough understanding of all phases and departments of business; it

will train you for increased responsibilities, prepare you for more important work, make you worth more money to your business and to yourself.

No matter what your position or income, you ought to read the famous little book called "Forging Ahead in Business." It is yours for the asking. You ought to read it; not merely for your own sake; not even *principally* for your own sake—but for the sake of the woman, and the children, who are the real judge and jury upon your career.

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the shot; moreover it had undoubtedly been fired from the revolver of Sheriff Abercrombie, which had been hanging in full sight on the wall of the next room. Abercrombie himself was down in the ballroom when the murder took place, as many witnesses could testify. The revolver was not found.

So far as was known, the only man who had been upstairs at the time the shot was fired was Charles Kincaid. He was engaged to Miss Bannerman, but according to several witnesses they had quarreled seriously that evening. Miss Bannerman herself had mentioned the quarrel, adding that she was afraid and wanted to keep away from him until he cooled off.

Charles Kincaid asserted that at the time the shot was fired he was in the men's locker-room—where, indeed, he was found, immediately after the discovery of Miss Bannerman's body. He denied having had any words with Miss Bannerman at all. He had heard the shot but it had had no significance for him—if he thought anything of it, he thought that "some one was potting cats outdoors."

Why had he chosen to remain in the locker-room during the dance?

No reason at all. He was tired. He was waiting until Miss Bannerman wanted to go home.

The body was discovered by Katie Golstien, the colored maid, who herself was found in a faint when the crowd of girls surged upstairs for their coats. Returning from the kitchen, where she had been getting a bite to eat, Katie had found Miss Bannerman, her dress wet with blood, already dead on the floor.

BOTH the police and the newspapers attached importance to the geography of the country-club's second story. It consisted of a row of three rooms—the women's dressing-room and the men's locker-room at either end, and in the middle a room which was used as a cloak-room and for the storage of golf-clubs. The women's and men's rooms had no outlet except into this chamber, which was connected by one stairs with the ballroom below, and by another with the kitchen. According to the testimony of three negro cooks and the white caddy-master, no one but Katie Golstien had gone up the kitchen stairs that night.

As I remember it after five years, the foregoing is a pretty accurate summary of the situation when Charley Kincaid was accused of first-degree murder and committed for trial. Other people, chiefly negroes, were suspected (at the loyal instigation of Charley Kincaid's friends), and several arrests were made, but nothing ever came of them, and upon what grounds they were based I have long forgotten. One group, in spite of the disappearance of the pistol, claimed persistently that it was a suicide and suggested some ingenious reasons to account for the absence of the weapon.

Now when it is known how Marie Bannerman happened to die so savagely and so violently, it would be easy for me, of all people, to say that I believed in Charley Kincaid all the time. But I didn't. I thought that he had killed her, and at the same time I knew that I loved him with all my heart. That it was I who first happened upon the evidence which set him free was due not to any faith in his innocence but to a strange vividness with which, in moods of excitement, certain scenes stamp themselves on my memory, so that I can remember every detail and how that detail struck me at the time.

It was one afternoon early in July, when the case against Charley Kincaid seemed to be at its strongest, that the horror of the actual murder slipped away from me for a moment and I began to think about other incidents of that same haunted night. Some-

thing Marie Bannerman had said to me in the dressing-room persistently eluded me, bothered me—not because I believed it to be important, but simply because I couldn't remember. It was gone from me, as if it had been a part of the fantastic undercurrent of small-town life which I had felt so strongly that evening, the sense that things were in the air, old secrets, old loves and feuds, and unresolved situations, that I, an outsider, could never fully understand. Just for a minute it seemed to me that Marie Bannerman had pushed aside the curtain; then it had dropped into place again—the house into which I might have looked was dark now forever.

ANOTHER incident, perhaps less important, also haunted me. The tragic events of a few minutes after had driven it from everyone's mind, but I had a strong impression that for a brief space of time I wasn't the only one to be surprised. When the audience had demanded an encore from Catherine Jones, her unwillingness to dance again had been so acute that she had been driven to the point of slapping the orchestra leader's face. The discrepancy between his offense and the venom of the rebuff recurred to me again and again. It wasn't natural—or, more important, it hadn't seemed natural. In view of the fact that Catherine Jones had been drinking, it was explicable, but it worried me now as it had worried me then. Rather to lay its ghost than to do any investigating, I pressed an obliging young man into service and called on the leader of the band.

His name was Thomas, a very dark, very simple-hearted virtuoso of the traps, and it took less than ten minutes to find out that Catherine Jones' gesture had surprised him as much as it had me. He had known her a long time, seen her at dances since she was a little girl—why, the very dance she did that night was one she had rehearsed with his orchestra a week before. And a few days later she had come to him and said she was sorry.

"I knew she would," he concluded. "She's a right good-hearted girl. My sister Katie was her nurse from when she was born up to the time she went to school."

"Your sister?"

"Katie. She's the maid out at the country-club. Katie Golstien. You been reading 'bout her in the papers in 'at Charley Kincaid case. She's the maid. Katie Golstien. She's the maid at the country-club what found the body of Miss Bannerman."

"So Katie was Miss Catherine Jones' nurse?"

"Yes ma'am."

Going home, stimulated but unsatisfied, I asked my companion a quick question.

"Were Catherine and Marie good friends?"

"Oh, yes," he answered without hesitation. "All the girls are good friends here, except when two of them are tryin' to get hold of the same man. Then they warm each other up a little."

"Why do you suppose Catherine hasn't married? Hasn't she got lots of beaux?"

"Off and on. She only likes people for a day or so at a time. That is—all except Joe Cable."

NOW a scene burst upon me, broke over me like a dissolving wave. And suddenly, my mind shivering from the impact, I remembered what Marie Bannerman had said to me in the dressing-room: "Who else was it that saw?" She had caught a glimpse of some one else, a figure passing so quickly that she could not identify it, out of the corner of her eye.

And suddenly, simultaneously, I seemed to see that figure, as if I too had been vaguely conscious of it at the time, just as one is aware of a familiar gait or outline on the street long before there is any flicker of

GRAY hair—medical science has discovered—is a disease. It is called canities; and it consists in a failure of the natural functions which supply color to the hair. The fibres inside the hair become blanched. Notox replaces color in these blanched inner fibres, and so corrects canities.



She Chose to Stay Gray Until Notox Was Explained

TWO years ago she felt as strong a prejudice as anyone against coloring her hair. Now she uses Notox regularly.

The thing which converted her, which first prompted her to use Notox to banish her gray hair, was an explanation of the Notox principle.

Before Notox was invented—about two years ago—her hair had been graying, but she had steadfastly refused to color it—because the effects of such preparations as existed then were more disfiguring than the gray hair. Women who used them looked so obviously dyed. The tone of their hair was hard, flat, unreal. She preferred letting her hair stay gray to having it look like that.

Then she heard of Notox—a hair coloring based upon a new and a unique scientific principle. When this principle was explained to her, when she understood how it differed from the principles of those preparations she had shunned, she was converted to coloring her hair.

Hair, she learned, is a long, very tiny stem, with a rough outside covering. Underneath this is a layer of fibres. In these fibres nature puts its color.

Hair also is translucent. Light passes through it, as it does through fingernails, and so the natural color of hair, as we see it, is the combined effect of light shining on the hair and through the hair.

When hair turns gray—that is, when nature no longer supplies color to its inner layer of fibres—it is hopeless to try to duplicate the former color by coloring the outside covering of the hair. This is what the old-fashioned restorer did and this is why it failed. It merely painted over the outside of the hair, coating its natural

lustrous surface and shutting off the natural translucence of the hair's substance. The beauty of color which nature achieves by the combined effect of light shining on and through the hair was not attained—because the method of nature was not followed.

In its departure from this unnatural method lies the distinctive principle of Notox.

Notox follows nature's method of coloring hair—it places color in the layer of fibres underneath the outer covering of the hair—right where nature used to put its own color. It leaves no color on the outside. And so Notox colors hair without impairing in the least its natural translucence or the natural visibility of its lustre. By using Nature's technique, Notox duplicates nature's effects.

These facts about Notox have converted not only one woman, but many hundreds of thousands of women to coloring their hair—all since two years ago, when Notox was invented. The sheer beauty of the effects of Notox has ever since kept them devoted to its regular use.

Important Notice:

Notox is the only coloring that banishes gray hair in the safe and natural way. Its basic ingredient is an entirely new substance. The principles of its manufacture and use do not exist in any other product. They are furthermore fully protected by patent.

Notox is sold only in packages bearing the Notox trade-mark, as shown here. To be sure you get Notox, look for the Notox trade-mark. In beauty shops, see the seal of the Notox package broken before you permit application. This protects you. Notox is made by Inecto, Inc., New York; and by Notox, Ltd., Toronto.



7 Practical Facts About Notox

1. Notox is safe for both the hair and scalp. Hundreds of thousands of safe applications prove this.
2. Notox reproduces any natural shade of hair.
3. Notox is permanent. It combines with the hair, becoming a part of it. Friction, heat or sunlight will not change its color.
4. Notox requires only a single application. It takes from 20 to 30 minutes for color to develop. As the hair grows out, attention to the new growth is required every five or six weeks.
5. Notox permits permanent waving, marcel waving, water waving or curling.
6. Notox is unaffected by shampooing, fresh or salt-water bathing, Turkish or Russian baths, or by perspiration.
7. Notox can be applied by yourself or by your hairdresser.

Why the Notox Principle is Better:



A A red hair, magnified. Notice how nature distributes the color through the layers of fibres beneath the outer covering.



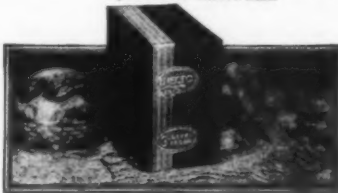
B A gray hair. Notice that the color is gone from the layer of fibres underneath the outer covering.



C A gray hair as colored by a coating dye. Notice the crust around the outside—how different from the method of nature.



D Hair re-colored by Notox. Notice that Notox has put color again in the layer of fibres underneath the outer coating—exactly as in Picture A, of nature-colored hair.



Notox is sold and applied in beauty shops; and sold in drug and department stores. The makers of Notox will, upon request, recommend a shop near you where you may have Notox expertly applied.

Send for Trial Sample

If you are discontented with the appearance of your hair, send in the coupon below with 10 cents in stamps and a trial sample will be sent you, in a plain wrapper, by return mail. Pin a few strands of your hair to the coupon to enable us to provide you with the shade of Notox which will harmonize with your appearance.

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The **GENERAL CORD**

—GOES A LONG WAY TO MAKE FRIENDS

recognition. On the corner of my own eye was stamped a hurrying figure—that might have been Catherine Jones.

But when the shot was fired, Catherine Jones was in full view of over fifty people. Was it credible that Katie Golstien, a woman of fifty, who as a nurse had been known and trusted by three generations of Davis people, would shoot down a young girl in cold blood at Catherine Jones' command?

"But when the shot was fired, Catherine Jones was in full view of over fifty people."

That sentence beat in my head all night, taking on fantastic variations, dividing itself into phrases, segments, individual words.

"But when the shot was fired—Catherine Jones was in full view—of over fifty people."

When the shot was fired! What shot? The shot we heard. When the shot was fired. . . . When the shot was fired. . . .

The next morning at nine o'clock, with the pallor of sleeplessness buried under a quantity of paint such as I had never worn before or have since, I walked up a rickety flight of stairs to the Sheriff's office.

Abercrombie, engrossed in his morning's mail, looked up curiously as I came in the door.

"Catherine Jones did it," I cried, struggling to keep the hysteria out of my voice. "She killed Marie Bannerman with a shot we didn't hear because the orchestra was playing and everybody was pushing up the chairs. The shot we heard was when Katie fired the pistol out the window after the music was stopped. To give Catherine an alibi!"

I WAS right—as everyone now knows, but for a week, until Katie Golstien broke down under a fierce and ruthless inquisition, nobody believed me. Even Charley Kincaid, as he afterward confessed, didn't dare to think it could be true.

What had been the relations between Catherine and Joe Cable no one ever knew, but evidently she had determined that his clandestine affair with Marie Bannerman had gone too far.

Then Marie chanced to come into the women's room while Catherine was dressing for her dance—and there again there is a certain obscurity, for Catherine always claimed that Marie got the revolver, threatened her with it and that in the ensuing struggle the trigger was pulled. In spite of everything I always rather liked Catherine Jones, but in justice it must be said that only a simple-minded and very exceptional jury would have let her off with five years. And in just about five years from her commitment my husband and I are going to make a round of the New York musical shows and look hard at all the members of the chorus from the very front row.

After the shooting she must have thought quickly. Katie was told to wait until the music stopped, fire the revolver out the window and then hide it—Catherine Jones neglected to specify where. Katie, on the verge of collapse, obeyed instructions, but she was never able to specify where she had hid the revolver. And no one ever knew until a year later, when Charley and I were on our honeymoon and Sheriff Abercrombie's ugly weapon dropped out of my golf-bag onto a Hot Springs golf-links. The bag must have been standing just outside the dressing-room door; Katie's trembling hand had dropped the revolver into the first aperture she could see.

We live in New York. Small towns make us both uncomfortable. Every day we read about the crime-waves in the big cities, but at least a wave is something tangible that you can provide against. What I dread above all things is the unknown depths, the incalculable ebb and flow, the secret shapes of things that drift through opaque darkness under the surface of the sea.

THE OLD HOME TOWN

(Continued from page 97)

just leap into fame. It isn't absolutely necessary nowadays, but it is a powerful help."

Ben broke in with an anger at he did not know just what:

"What's keepin' her from Europe? Have the boats quit running?"

"No, but—well, it takes money, and Petunia wont ask you for it. There's several gentlemen who would be willing to pay her expenses, but—well, she doesn't even get mad at 'em. She just laughs."

Ben was sickened by this implication. He wanted to go out and shoot somebody for daring to think of such a thing. And Petunia just laughed! She must have changed! Probably everybody in New York was so wicked that you had to get used to it or die.

He grew impatient to see what the evil Nineveh had done to his little sister. The landlady offered to call her, if Ben were in a hurry; otherwise she needed the sleep.

She had sung at a recital the evening before, and had made such success that she had been fêted at a big supper and had not come in till three.

(Was this indeed Petunia?)

Ben had not the heart to have her awakened. He said he would go out and get himself a room at a hotel. But the landlady had an empty room, so she installed him there.

She assured him that he would have time to dash down to the office of the dam-construction company and report for duty. By the time he had found the subway and shot to the skyscraper and back, the landlady met him with the word that Petunia was up, had breakfasted, and was ready to be off to her singing lesson.

"I had the most awful time holding her till you got here. I had to tell her a lie about her teacher putting her off for half an hour, and now he'll be in a fury. Hide—here she comes!"

SHE thrust Ben into the drawing-room, and he watched the descent of a Diana-tall, Diana-slender, impossibly elegant figure resembling one of those inhumanly decorative fashion-plate cartoons fined to the vanishing point.

A tight little helmet of black satin hugged her close-cropped head; her bright red lips were pursed as if for a kiss; and her black-bordered eyelids drooped with a look of disdain over smoldering eyes. But this was because she was buttoning her gloves.

Ben could not believe his own eyes. This foreigner never came out of Carthage. Nor could he believe his ears when the exotic thing paused to look in at the door and say to the landlady (as it sounded to Ben):

"G'by, dolling! I'll be back in an ah or two."

"There's a gentleman here to see you."

Her voice dropped to a whisper: "Good Lord, is it the man for the piano-rent? The dry-cleaner? Or the music-store man?"

The landlady shook her head and motioned her in.

She entered with insolence, her chin high, her eyelids low, and said "Yes?" to the figure in the gloom, then gasped "Ben?" screamed "Ben!" All the veneer she had been acquiring at such pains for her ambitious purposes fell from her. She leaped at his throat, hugged and kissed him, smothering him with love, crying and laughing and asking a dozen questions about everything and everybody all at once. Ben had his sister back again.

He rubbed the end of his ticklish nose and tried to pretend that he was only scratching his cheek when she could see that he was knocking tears off his lashes.

But when she pushed him into a chair



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and lay in his arms sobbing, his tears rained on her eyes unashamed. The long accumulated griefs of loneliness and separation broke the dam and flooded their souls.

She started up from her tears, at last, realizing that she was in danger of losing her lesson entirely, and she dragged Ben away—to the street-car. He insisted on a taxi. She opposed the extravagance, but he would not be denied. It hurt him to think of her in a street-car, standing up, jostled and crushed. It hurt him worse when she said:

"I often have to walk—when I haven't the fare."

"You mean to say you ever get as poor as that?"

"Oh, everybody in New York is always getting caught without the fare. Old Hickling—he's a millionaire—borrowed two dollars from me last week to pay a taxi."

"What were you doing in a taxi with a millionaire?"

"His limousine broke down."

"What were you doing in a limousine?"

"Oh, he was bringing me home from Mrs. Stope's, and the moonlight was fine, and he whisked me off for a spin. His car broke down just as I was preparing to get out and walk. So we took a taxi."

It must be a rare brother who is not mortally hurt by learning of those phases of his sister's education and sophistication.

Petunia was simply going the pace of thousands of other girls, students, idlers, laborers, what not. Starving one day, feasting the next; walking in the snow, lolling in a palace car; cooking an egg over a gas-jet, eating partridges in a mansion; cudgeling the brain with toil, playing at passion for points.

She had her own code, and a high one, and kept to it, but it did not include seclusion nor guarantee her against adventure.

"Why didn't you warn me you were coming, darling!" she cried abruptly. "I've promised to go to dinner at Mrs. Stope's tonight. I sing for my supper there. She's richer than poison, and she wants to take me to Paris with her and pay all my expenses till I'm launched in opera or concert."

"Pay all your expenses?" Ben snapped. "Why should she? What right's she got?"

"Only the love of art and artists. She's sent painters abroad, and sculptors, and she's always boosting some pauper up to the clouds. I'll pay her back some day."

"But you're no pauper. Why shouldn't I get a little fun out of life?"

"Oh, Ben, you're too wonderful! But I can't take your money any longer."

"Who else has got any use for it?"

"Spend it on yourself. Travel, have a good time, marry. Aren't you ever going to marry?"

"Looks mighty unlikely."

"Then spend it on Mother. Show the poor darling a little of the world."

STILTS AND A COMPLEX

He was a professor of mathematics in a fresh-water college and stood almost five feet three. Therein lay the whole trouble. And from that trouble emerged another man, but the little professor was lost forever. It's one of the most original stories you've ever read, or that James Hopper has ever written. You may count upon reading it in an early issue.

"You can't budge her. I couldn't make her come with me even to see you."

"The poor angel! I feel like a selfish beast. Oh, how about Odalea? Is she—don't you—aren't you—"

"She was engaged to our star boarder when I left."

There was something in Ben's tone that led her to avoid further references to Miss Lail. But she made a note in her heart that she would kill herself trying to be a famous singer just to show those Lails what they missed in looking down on the Webbs.

She dragged Ben up with her to her teacher, who went at her like a walrus with the rabies because she was late, then smothered her with compliments as soon as he heard her first vocalises and told her brother how proud he should be of her:

"In five years the world calls her its greatest singer—you mock my warts."

He made Ben sit through a lesson and taught him what a difficult science an art may be, what a feat of engineering it is to train a voice to stand all stresses and strains without losing simplicity and spontaneity.

"Talk about harnessin' the Mississippi!" Ben exclaimed on the way home. "It's simply pie compared to harnessin' what he calls the stream of tone."

AT the boarding-house, Petunia called up Mrs. Stope to beg off from her dinner on account of her brother's sudden arrival. Mrs. Stope would listen to nothing but Ben's coming along.

"Good gosh," Ben groaned. "I can't go. I'd disgrace you for life. Why, I'm not even up to a party at Mrs. Budlong's."

"Nobody is quite up to Mrs. Budlong's expectations, but Mrs. Stope isn't afraid of herself or her guests. She'll love you. She does already from what I've told her about you."

Ben fought in vain. Petunia dug out his evening clothes, had them pressed, and went marketing for a few improvements on his shirts, ties and socks and buttons.

When he was dressed, she told him he was magnificent. When she was dressed, he did not dare tell her what he thought. He would have called anybody else so décolleté, "indecent." He could not think the word of Petunia. But he kept his eyes off her.

He went sweating as to a guillotine, only to find it a home where wealth sought comfort solely. Mrs. Stope had no reputation to make, and chose her friends from no other Blue Book than her own interest.

Ben was not raw enough to be a curiosity. His pride kept him from being ridiculous or aggressive. His grammar was as good as that of a young English lord, who sat opposite him, and also said "aint" and "gosh!" and dropped his "g's", instead of his "h's" as Ben expected.

The dinner was simple, the servants hospitable, the company at ease and all unafraid of themselves or their elbow-neighbors. Mrs. Stope, who was at heart a sister of charity, was inspired to introduce her humblest guest as her most distinguished.

"Mr. Webb is on the staff of Craigie—the great engineer, you know. He and Mr. Webb are engaged in the biggest engineering feat of modern times."

Ben was threatened with apoplexy for a moment, but his loyalty to his dam and his chief warned him so, that when he found himself questioned, he found himself eloquent.

He was dazed to realize that he had been doing all the talking, but his audience had been entranced, or pretended to be.

As they left the dining-room, famous among connoisseurs for its treasures of dining-room art, Petunia seized Ben by the arm and murmured:

"You were glorious. Umm, but I'm proud of you!"

Later it was her turn, and the guests dis-

posed themselves in the music-room. A pipe-organ had been built in, and as Petunia sang to its accompaniment, Ben was reminded of the dingy little church at home, the squawky and explosive organ and the dowdy people who had not thought much of Petunia because she was only one of them, and they were far more afraid of praise than of condescension. Contempt is nine-tenths cowardice, in art as elsewhere.

Ben had lived to hear his sister avenged. Received with half-hearted commendation or ill-concealed sneers in her village, she was greeted with hysterical superlatives in this museum of a home, which the most famous singers had adorned with the fleeting splendors of their song.

Lord Something-or-other cried: "Good gosh, but aint she mahvellous? Mahvellous! Absolutely the best singin' I evvah hud." The organist, himself a celebrated name ending in "sky," kissed her hand with awe, and Mrs. Stope kissed her cheek—then led her up to Ben, who sat shattered as if by lightning, gaping in disbelief that this nightingale who had caroled with such incredible ease such indomitable music, could be his sister, the little Webb girl from Carthage, the plumber's sister, the shy choir-singer and the giver of piano-lessons to unwilling children.

Mrs. Stope's apparent exquisiteness of tact was really plain sincerity when she pleaded:

"Now you see why the best in the world is none too good for her. You're going to let me give it to her, aren't you? I want to take her to Paris with me next week. I have her passage booked. I shall be more than repaid by the privilege of furthering her genius."

"That's mighty nice of you," Ben said in a misery of difficulty. "And I sure do appreciate it. But—well—you see, anyway—well, what I mean is—Petunia don't have to accept—well, o' course—charity is not the word. But what I mean is, I can pay all that, and I—I wish you'd let me."

"All the better," cried Mrs. Stope. "But you'll let me introduce her to the right people, wont you? And give a lion-hunting old woman the fun of claiming to know her, wont you?"

"Lord, ma'am, but you got a nice way of puttin' things. If you'll take her under your wing and protect her, it would be simply great, seeing as her mother can't go with her."

"My mother!" Petunia sobbed. "I ought to run home and see my mother before I go so far."

"But if you delay, my dear, you'll have to cross alone, and the ocean is only a millpond nowadays; and we'll be late as it is, for the season over there."

THE upshot of it was that, after a few days of ferocious shopping for Petunia and hasty inspection of machinery for his company by Ben, a big ship was dragged from its slip and a little figure waving a dripping handkerchief dwindled into nothing as Ben flaunted his handkerchief at space and throbbed with an ache of mingled delight and pain.

In his pocket was Petunia's long letter of good-by to her mother. It had seemed better to let Ben break the news when he got home, than to try telling of so much in telegrams to a lonely old woman with no one to comfort her.

Leaving the dock, Ben was for the rest of the day a keen mechanical expert with no heart for any mechanism less perfect than his sister's technic.

When he reached the boarding-house, he found a telegram propped against the mirror of his bureau. It was a long day-letter, and he looked at the signature first. The one word "Odalea" stabbed him. He sank into a chair and read what she had evidently been too agitated to condense:

DEAR BEN. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER YOU WILL FORGIVE ME FOR THIS WIRE OR NOT BUT YOU MIGHT NEVER FORGIVE ME IF I DID NOT SEND IT STOP THE FACT IS THAT YOUR DEAR MOTHER HAS BEEN VERY ILL SINCE THE DAY AFTER YOU LEFT BUT HAS FORBIDDEN EVERYBODY TO LET YOU KNOW STOP I ONLY FOUND IT OUT TODAY AND THE DOCTOR SAYS THAT WHILE HE STILL HAS EVERY HOPE SHE IS REALLY VERY ILL AND DANGEROUSLY LONESOME STOP I HOPE I AM ALARMING YOU NEEDLESSLY AND THAT YOU CAN ADD THIS TO YOUR OTHER GRIEVANCES AGAINST ME BUT I AM AFRAID TO KEEP YOU IN THE DARK STOP PERHAPS PETUNIA MAY WANT TO COME HOME WITH YOU AND THE TWO BOYS BUT IN ANY CASE GIVE HER MY LOVE AND TENDEREST SYMPATHY AND BELIEVE ME VERY VERY TRULY YOURS

ODALEA

From this incoherence Ben took all the panic that must have inspired it.

He dug his fingers in his suddenly tormented brow under an onset of such terror as he had never known. He sat rocking and writhing and moaning:

"Oh, no! No! Not Mamma—not poor little Mamma!"

The landlady heard him, and getting no answer to her taps on the door and her timid queries, came in to see what sickness could wring such noises from so strong a man.

Her touch on his shoulder made him leap from his chair in fright. The telegram dropped from his hands. He babbled, pointing to it:

"My mother! She's sick! She's been terrible sick! She may be dying. She may be dead—way out there all by herself, and poor Petunia is out on the ocean, and Guido and Junior not there. Mamma is alone and dying maybe, and me off here in this God-awful city!"

The city was not so God-awful as Ben thought, for the little old landlady, who had known so much grief and had seen so much of it smiting her long procession of guests, took him in her arms and gave him the only comfort there was—a sense of company in the dark and of arms devoting their strength to holding together the flesh that the plunging heart seemed to be hammering to pieces.

She gave his distraught reason her counsel. She looked up the trains and packed his things and ordered a taxicab. She even decided for him the ghastly riddle of notifying Petunia and his brothers.

"A wireless would reach her, but it would only frighten her to death and break her heart. She couldn't get back for two or three weeks. As for your brothers, wait till you get home. By that time your mother will be well, I'm sure."

"If only I could even hope as much!" Ben moaned. "But I guess you're right about Petunia. Let her have as many hours of happiness as she can."

THE same high-riding moon silvered the car-roofs of the train that sped West with Ben, and the roof of the old Webb home where the mother was threshed with pain, the roof of the preparatory school chapel where Nelson was practicing with the Glee Club, and the roof of the dormitory where Guido was writing another masterpiece. And the same moon silvered the waves plashing away from Petunia's ship, and added an unearthly glamour to her upturned face. She thought of her ambitions, and her heart was full of song, but the infatuated youths on either side of her gazed at her in moon-struck adoration, each making her his own ambition.

And the same moon glimmered on a slab of marble almost lost now in the weeds that had grown up unchecked by the im-



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The most dreaded disease of humanity—cancer of the mouth—can be the result of bad teeth. The American Society for the Control of Cancer charges tooth decay with being a principal cause of this fearful affliction.

"How I Found Out the Beauty Value of My Teeth"

"We were just talking—Tom and I—while waiting for the tea and things. I smiled my prettiest for him.

"Speaking of teeth,' he said, which of course we weren't, 'yours are simply glorious.'

"Hush, silly!' I said, but he knew I didn't mean it . . . and he didn't hush. I could have told him I'd used Colgate's all my life. But I don't see why we should tell men our beauty secrets, do you?"

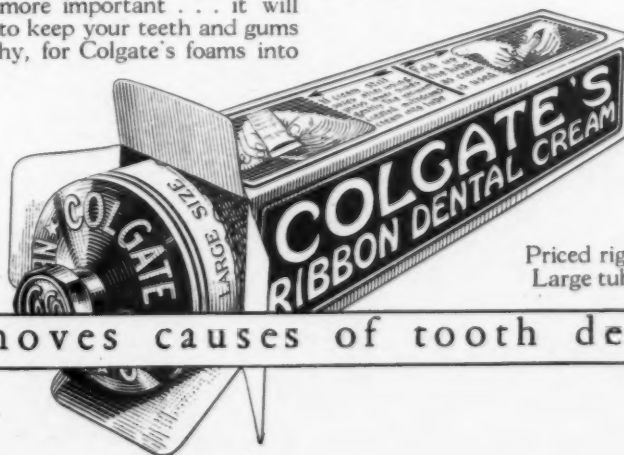
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Large tube 25c.

removes causes of tooth decay



THAT MYSTERIOUS ART BEING A WOMAN

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Freedom, frankness . . . "Never was femininity so much a fine art," declares the younger.

Being a woman means more today than ever before. She wants more, she gets more. *But she has to put more into the job!*

She has to cultivate beauty as never before. She must have wit and poise and style—and that mystery, charm.

It's a strange art—made up of many things. Personal things. One in particular which is essentially feminine; which no woman can afford to forget, if she would be attractive.

She has to fight for it. For her daily bath cannot keep her daintiness of person safe from devastating perspiration moisture and odor.

Rings of stain under the arm or across the back? Clothing ruined? A tell-tale odor that gives the lie to beauty? *Unthinkable to the socially successful nowadays!* They take no chances!

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A physician formulated Odorono as a corrective for *both* moisture and odor. For years it has been used by doctors and nurses in hospitals because of its scientific action and antiseptic qualities.

Clear, clean and harmless, it is as pleasant to use as a dainty toilet water. And you need use it only twice a week to be always fresh and free from any offending moisture and odor. No other precautions are necessary.

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prisoned housewife who had fought them back so many years since the far-off time when she had seen the headstone set up above the body of her young husband, the father of all these scattered children. There was room alongside his bed for a second headstone, and at their feet, room for at least four others. It was what they called a family lot.

Chapter Forty-five

WHEN Ben swung off the train as it chugged into Carthage, he met Craigie, who hurried to greet him with a handclasp of such warmth that Ben groaned:

"Is she—is she—"

"She's better."

Good news can hurt horribly. Ben had braced himself against the worst so well that sudden hope relaxed his grip, but Craigie caught his elbow and steadied him, took his suitcase from his hand, passed it to his waiting chauffeur, and guided Ben to his own car. And the car moved up the steep street and along the levels so smoothly that it seemed to stand still while the old town, shabby with spring rains, ran forward to meet its prodigal.

Contrasted with the dressed-up, aloof, formidable tremendousness of New York, Carthage reclaimed Ben with the welcoming tenderness of an old coat, soft slippers, familiar walls, a rocking chair at twilight.

Craigie told him succinctly about his mother's breakdown following the night of the flood and the cyclone—the threat of pneumonia that had been averted, and the vague influenza that had seized her in her weakness. Fever had made her delirious at times, but now that Ben was home, she would soon be all right, no doubt.

Strange, that the words, "no doubt" and "doubtless" and "undoubtedly" are always used, with a curious perversity and a kind of deprecation, to indicate that there is abundant doubt!

So Craigie's words raised Ben only a little above despair and left him in anxiety. To escape from looking back into the depths, Ben opened his suitcase and took out a report that he had been working on all the way home. Craigie stuffed it into his pocket, and said:

"Forget it! I hope I don't need to tell you that anything any of us can do is yours if you'll only let us know. That goes for my wife, too, of course."

Ben wrung his hand, and stepping from the car, hastened into the house. At the door he met Hunter Parrish just coming out, a bundled-up skeleton, hollow-eyed, hollow-cheeked, hollow-voiced. He put a handful of bones into Ben's hand and croaked:

"Glad you're back. We've had one hell of a time without you."

When our enemies appear before us crushed with illness or other misfortune, they take an exquisitely unfair advantage of us. Ben needed somebody to loathe, wanted to hate Parrish, and had cultivated a very helpful rage against him. Now he had lost even that support.

He pushed through the door that Parrish left open and found a trained nurse hurrying up the steps. She was a stranger to Ben, a foreigner, one of the importations made necessary by the eight hundred engineers and the thousands of workmen quartered on the town. She turned on the stairway with a cowl-like awkwardness and moped softly:

"Mr. Ben, I presume?"

Ben nodded and whispered as he set his suitcase down:

"How's Mother?"

"Sleeping."

So beautiful a word, and so close a twin to so hideous a sister-word! Miss Bunce motioned Ben to follow her to his mother's

room. The door was muffled against slamming by a towel from knob to knob. She pressed it ajar a little and let him look in. Watching his eyes, she saw there such love in such terror as even she had seldom witnessed.

BEN'S heart leaped to run to his mother, but her sleep was like a window, barring him from her while exhibiting her to him with an uncanny clarity. She was as strange as an effigy of herself in wax, still, stark, devoid of all her intense alertness to his presence; so unapproachable that her flutter of breath seemed an illusion.

Perhaps no man ever quite sees his mother as she is, for she is the first thing that he ever learned to realize while the power of observation was gradually evolving. And the mists of that old cloud enaureole her and keep her separate from all other woman-kind.

Ben saw his mother perhaps for the first time as a mortal woman in pain and danger. In a way, she looked younger since she had lost what in other women he would have called fat, but in her was a noble matronliness. Yet she looked older, too, old as the world, old as a symbol, a sibyl eternally mature, perennially redeemed from age.

He longed to call to her to waken, as always before, and turn toward him her full round face, her two eyes streaming with love as with shafts of light from within, her two arms leaping out to him.

Yet there is something so precious about sleep that its invasion is always a kind of sacrilege, and Ben, for all his longing and all his alarm, felt that he must let his mother sleep out her sleep for once. If anybody had ever earned a long Sunday morning abed, his mother was the one. Even God had rested after six days of creation—and she had borne six children, and raised four of them.

He smiled sorrowfully at the irony of the world. Thanks to her self-sacrifice and skimping and scraping, Ben had prospered till he was rich enough to get his mother anything she was likely to want. And all she wanted was to be let alone awhile in the beggar's paradise of sleep.

The beggar's paradise! And yet nobody on earth was rich enough to buy anybody a finer present than a long, long sleep. No cloak of royal sables, no couch of snowy ermine could be so soft. The cunningest goldsmith could not contrive a diadem or a diamond ring that would glow as richly on a brow or on weary hands as the glamour of slumber. No journeying in chariots or yachts or on Aladdin's carpet could be so smooth, so far-roving.

Yet while Ben could by his mere forbearance bless his mother with unbroken rest, he realized that she had won the bliss only by way of anguish, sickness, helplessness; and peace prolonged too far would mean—

His heart was throttled by the thought, and his hand clutched his lips just in time to check the cry of terror at the thought of life without his mother. Fear threw him back to the days of fear; when he was a young wild thing in a world of enemies. He was once more that hot-tempered, fierce-battling lad whose hand had been against all the other boys, and theirs against him; against all the teachers, the elders and the respectables, and theirs against him.

Once more he was running home to his sole unflinching friend, his attorney against the world. He was, as usual, bleeding and torn from a fight, sick with the aftermath of his own anger, and the contempt that had been heaped upon him. Now and then in those gory days his father had stopped him on his headlong way to his mother, whispering:

"Your poor mother is asleep. Lord knows she gets little enough of it! Let's let her rest awhile."

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It startled Ben to see his father before him so vividly, his father dead long, long ago, when the children were so young that he was hardly more than a legend. Ben began to remember many things of that forgotten era. He thought: "Why, I am as old now as my father was then!" And this gave a new poignancy to his sympathy for that poor soldier of justice shot dead in a law-court when Junior was only a cradle-baby.

And this word brought into his thought the first realization that his mother had never called any of her children, "Baby." He himself was "Bensy;" Petunia was "Toony;" Guido "Gwee," and Nelson Junior never Nelson, always "Junior,"—except that all of them were, of course, often called by the universal endearment of their region for almost anybody—"honey."

"Baby" was his mother's name for his father! And he had heard his father call her "Mamma!" As young husbands often do, he had doubtless called her that long before she was a mother. And the sweet foolishness of this somehow brought tears to the eyes of this bachelor, this outsider from the blissful imbecilities of wedded lovers.

Here he was, a grown man only now un-

derstanding things that had surrounded his childhood. Here he was pecking in on the souls of his father and mother and desecrating the amazing fact that they also had been young and human.

It was strange that all this should come back to him now, as if memory were some old trunk in the attic, and he just finding it and rifling it with a heart leaping and aching.

Among the forgotten keepsakes he found the fearful day of the wedding at Mrs. Budlong's, when his mother had taken him and Petunia, and he had disgraced the family of Webb by fighting Ulie Budlong indoors and out. While he was wallowing Ulie, a man had driven up to call for his mother and take her home where her husband lay dying. He and Petunia had been shut out in the hall, while their mother held her last communion with their father. But Ben, clinging rebelliously to the door-knob, had heard his mother sobbing: "Baby!" and his father's voice moaning: "Mamma!" It was the return of those old forgotten outcries, those long belated echoes, that reminded him of what had been so deeply submerged that he hardly so much remembered it as learned it anew.

By and by their mother had come out alone and told them that their father was gone. And from that time on, she had been to them father, mother, everybody; she had had no man's love or help against the world, and no protection even from her own children's everlasting assaults on her peace, her love, her repose. How well, how more than well, she had earned this belated, first, long loitering abed!

And when she woke,—if she awoke,—what would she waken to? Merely more years of self-torment, of puttering at useless tasks to while the long days away; of traveling nowhere forever all the eternal evenings in that old squealing rocker whose

office he now perceived for the first time. His mother had made a cradle of that chair, and her grief was the beloved child of her heart that she rocked and rocked to keep it from crying aloud lest it break the sleep of the other children. She had kept it alive by soothing it to silence; it had never died, but only lived the better in the secrecy of sleep. He understood now why, as he had studied her sometimes, she would begin to rock with frantic speed, smiling at something he had not ventured to ask about, smiling so desperately that he had been afraid to ask. And all the while it was her loneliness, her sleepless woe.

Her children had grown up and flown off; they could never be her children again; they would never come home to stay. Her lap was forever tenantless, her breast no longer a pillow for children to whisper secrets to and cry against till they fell asleep. And now she had fallen asleep all by herself in the house that once more belonged to her and her husband, who had come back in her dreams to comfort her.

What other comfort was there for her when she woke to the relentless world that had used her harshly and finished with her? Ben thanked God that he at least had stayed home with her and kept a home about her, but he was not so proud when he remembered how he kept her worried all the time about his unfortunate love-affair. For it was always hard to say whether she suffered more when Odalea was kind than when Odalea was indifferent.

His infinite indebtedness to his mother overwhelmed him. What could he do to pay it off? How, in the little time at hand, could he make her so happy as to retrieve the years and years of accumulated obligation? How could he repay her for the gift of her life to him? What countergift was there for her? She had no interest in silks or servants, no heart for wandering, no pleasure in luxury, no use for anything that money could buy. She had given him life. He had no skill even to save her life. And if he could do that, would it be a blessing or a curse?

As he hung incapable even of so much resolution as it took to form a wish, he saw his mother stir a little. Her lips formed a kiss; her hands quivered as if they would rise had they the power. In the clouded voice of one who speaks from a dream, she murmured:

"Baby!"

The nurse, seeing that Ben did not move, touched him:

"She's calling you!"

"No, she's talking to my father."

BEN ran to her as an elder brother to comfort her, ran softly and fell to his knees at her side, to give her arms something to clasp. He had to lift her hands, her weary, wrinkled hands, and lay her heavy arms about his neck.

They seemed to delight in him, and her aspen hands trembled about his brow and his hair, but with a terrifying feebleness.

She opened her eyes drowsily, as one about to sleep surveys the room where the body is to be left while the spirit wanders; and stared at her son in a dim amazement, studied him as through thick veils, thought him over with difficulty, puzzled him out and slowly understood who he really was.

Then as if her very intuitions were running down like a clock that will soon cease to keep time but tries to strike the hour, love and welcome chimed in her eyes, slowly, slowly. Ben went almost frantic, waiting for her awful deliberation before she whispered:

"Why, Bensy! Honey! When did you get home?"

"Just now, Mamma. Just this minute, Mamma."

"You been away so long—a mighty long

"That Jocelyn Girl"

Samuel Merwin gives that title to the next picture novelty, created by this magazine—a complete novel in very few words, realized in stunning pictures, that begins in the July issue. And the pictures were painted by—

JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG

while you been away, seems to me. D'anybody tell you how sick I've been?"

"Y-no! I just came home because I got so lonely for you."

"Ho-ho! Nobody gets lonely for me! I'm no use to anybody any more. Toony—was she well?"

"Oh, she's fine—fine! She sings like an angel."

"Did she come home with you? I thought I heard somebody singing."

"Well, no. You see, she's doing so fine I thought you'd want her to go—to go on and perfect herself."

"Yes, that's right. Gwee—and Junior—"

"I didn't stop to see them. I—"

"Did they say anything about ever coming home?"

"I didn't see 'em, Mamma. I didn't wait."

"They got better things to do than waste their time on an old nuisance like their mother. Who's that singing? Ask Toony if she wont sing about—about—"

Her voice had grown so faint as to be hardly more than a ghost of thought. Ben had to set his cheek almost against her lips to catch the little puffs of breath that made the mystery of speech. And she was so far away that when he tried to recall her from swooning into oblivion, he must put his lips in the porches of the ear that had once been awakened from the very death of sleep by the faintest wail of one of her babes or the merest whiff of a distant sneeze. And now he cried to her:

"I brought you a long letter from Petunia, Mamma!"

"Why didn't she come home? Oh, my babies, if I could only just touch 'em once—just once! Hours—days—weeks—years! Hours—weeks—weeks! Long nights—long nights!"

"I'll send for them this minute, Mamma."

"No, no, it's too far! The poor darlings might catch cold or something. I'm ashamed to be so stupid. I got no—no gumption at all. Will you forgive me? You're just home and me not up to look after you, you poor neglected—neglec— Oh, dear!"

She whimpered a little and slept herself away from his voice. He studied her, revered her on his knees.

Chapter Forty-six

ODALEA woke in the midblack from a nightmare that fled from her memory at the opening of her eyes. She lay panting with some fright that she could not recall.

Suddenly she sat up and flung off drowsiness as sharply as if it were a blanket about her.

If she had been a man, her duty would have been plain. She would have risen, gone straight to Ben and said: "Let me help!"

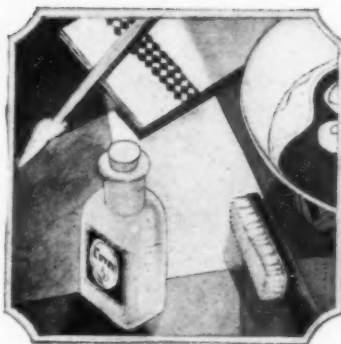
But she was a woman, and a thousand old withes held her back from obeying her heart. But why should they hold her? They were imaginary, easier to break than the withes Samson had broken with a gesture.

Well! Her withes were snapped.

She stepped from the bed; her feet blindly sought her slippers, her hands her bathrobe. She opened her door softly and went with a thievish stillness to the telephone in the lower hall. To Central she mumbled Doctor Emmett's number. After a weary while his wife answered:

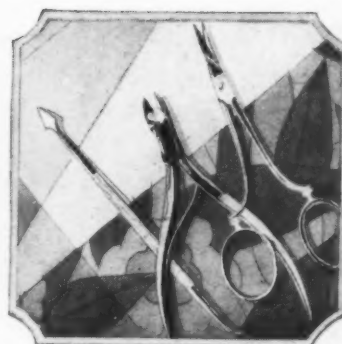
"The Doctor was called out—to Mrs. Webb's, it was. She's—well, I don't think she's any better."

Odalea left her slippers, ran up the cold stairs in her wincing bare feet, made a light in her room and put on her clothes as fast as she could, and sq silently that she did not waken her father and mother. If they



WHAT TO USE

To keep the cuticle smooth, apply Cutex Cuticle Remover with orange stick and cotton after washing hands.



WHAT NOT TO USE

Northam Warren advises against using metal instruments of any kind, or ever cutting the delicate cuticle.

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Wash hands in warm soapy water. File nails to ovals. Dip orange stick in Cutex, twist cotton around end and dip in bottle again. Work gently around base of each nail to loosen the dry skin. Then pass the wet stick beneath tips to clean and bleach them.

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Order a few bars of Oh Henry! . . . and serve them sliced.

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in the still brooding presence of a mother who had just rounded out a life of selfless devotion, a life of the other kind of love that women pour out on men.

It was enough for Odalea that she had not failed to be with Ben in the hour of his torment. He clung to her, leaned upon her, wept in her arms. Their tears had been married, at least.

When at last Ben implored her to go home before she fainted, she was drained of strength and feeling. She hardly knew that Hunter Parrish waited for her at the door, helped her down the steps, held the gate open for her, and as she tottered, put his arm about her in the seclusion of the loneliest hour of all, when the full dawn shines on empty streets.

Hungry for a last sight of Odalea, Ben had staggered to the window, and he saw Hunter Parrish's gesture of possession; he saw that Odalea made no protest. He found one more sigh in his fagged-out heart for the glimpse of heaven he had caught in the embrace of Odalea.

He nodded in one more submission. It was best, after all. He had no right to happiness. To think of happiness was blasphemous with his mother turned to ice, and all the woe he had to pass along to her children.

Before Petunia's eyes the cliffs of France would soon be rising, white and lofty as her own ambitions. How could he break her heart just as it was beginning to bloom with hope? Heaven could blast the joys of people that way, but Ben Webb was only human. How could he let Petunia know?

And Guido just finishing college! And Junior just making ready to enter! What words were there? He had put off sending for them because he could not believe that his mother could die. If he telegraphed them to come at once, they would be too late for the funeral. If he didn't telegraph them, he feared that they would never forgive him.

He ought to write them letters. But he never could write. Words dodged him or tripped him. And he had never had such news to break.

If only Odalea could have done that for him! There was so much in his life that she could have done—could do! But how could he ask her now? She liked him; she would do anything kind: but she belonged to Hunter Parrish.

ODALEA, never dreaming that Ben had seen Parrish's arm draw round her, had gone from Ben's view before she realized that Parrish was with her at all. Then she murmured, "Please!" and advanced out of his clasp.

They went on in silence till they came to her house. Then he made to take her in his arms for a good-by kiss. She put his hands off and stared at him incredulously, saying:

"Can't you see, Hunter? Don't you understand?"

"You mean you don't love me?"

"Of course not!"

"Of course you don't mean it? Or, of course you don't love me?"

"I don't love you. I didn't mean to play unfair with you. I don't know—things drift along. I tried to be nice to everybody—Mamma, Papa, you, everybody; but I haven't been very nice to anybody."

He was staggered, but plucky:

"I'm sorry you couldn't love me. I love you very much."

"And I'm very fond of you, but—well, I could never have been a good wife to you. You'll go wandering all over the world, but I'm rooted here. If I were transplanted, I think I'd die—like a tree. The soil isn't so very wonderful, but it's the one I grew up in. I could never change."

heard her open and close the front door, they paid no heed.

She was mortally afraid of the dark streets, the branches of the trees, brandishing their skeleton arms and fingers above their black shadows in the white flare of the arc-lights at the corners. There was some voodoo horror in their conjury, and her blood chilled.

But when she reached Ben Webb's home, she was more afraid than ever, and of even less substantial ghosts.

The doctor's little car was there at the curb with a laprobe over its hood. Odalea longed to go into the house, and she dared not. It seemed to be filled with struggle, with black angels, with ghoulish spirits tearing the soul out of the body of a poor old woman. The house seemed itself to stand aghast, helpless, strangely mournful. Somebody in there was dying.

At last the doctor came out, his head drooping, his hands listless. Odalea met him at the gate and whispered:

"How is she?"

He could not say the word that confessed his defeat. His sad eyes and his humility were enough.

Odalea ran to the porch, and was about to hurl herself against the door, when it opened and Hunter Parrish stood before her,

tousled, distraught. He put out his arms to her:

"Odalea!"

She thrust him aside and ran up the stairs. A door was open. In the dim light Mrs. Webb lay as on a catafalque, extended in heroic marble.

On his knees in front of the bed, Ben crouched, his head in the sheets, his hands, high in the air, clenching and unclenching and flinging themselves about with a pitiful likeness to the empty hands of rejected beggars. Though there was no need of silence, he was strangling his voice in his throat and in the sheets, yet making sounds of such awful animal agony that Odalea found her own throat echoing them as one frightened beast at night takes up the baying of another.

She ran to Ben, dropped to her knees at his side, set one arm upon his farther shoulder, reached up her other hand and interlaced her fingers with his.

He turned in a stupor and stared at her through eyes that were but bubbles of tears. He must have seen her in a shimmer of light, and—he did not smile, yet his twisted mien of agony became somehow a whit less desolate. His fingers clenched on hers; he turned a little into her bosom and his head fell and fell until her breast received his hot brow and his streaming tears.

And so they clung together a long while. . . .

She did not leave him until broad daylight took all the beauty and tenderness from bereavement and cast its cold satirical light on everything and everybody.

Ben was so devastated by his loss that Odalea could not speak of her love for him. It would have looked petty

"For Our Dumb Friends"

It was for them that the ladies planned the entertainment, and who in town could save more money on the program-printing than Mr. Peters? Who indeed? So Mr. Peters was placed on the committee and tried to function. How well he succeeded will be told in an early issue by Robert C. Benchley.

"Well, the Lord bless you for the nicest girl I ever knew."

"Thank you, Hunter. And—well, better luck next time!"

He had to smile at that. He had been in love so often and had been so untrue to all his girls—and to himself!

Chapter Forty-seven

FROM her window Odeala saw the dam growing, hundreds of men toiling, the river making no more war against them.

She did not go to the funeral of Ben's mother. She felt that it would look dramatic. It would start gossip. She had become so subdued to the village that the avoidance of conspicuousness had become almost an industry in itself.

She wrote Petunia a letter of such frankness and solicitude as women rarely use to one another. She spoke reverently of Mrs. Webb, and told of her illness, delicately breaking the shock of the outcome. She spoke of Ben with meekness and self-reproach and no hint of any claim upon him. She added what little comfort she could hope to put into written words.

She sent a note to Ben, telling him what she had written, and he was infinitely grateful. She had saved him from the grisliest task of his life.

Guido and Junior reached Carthage after their mother had been lowered into the soil from which all mothers spring. They wept and heaped flowers upon her grave, and then went back to their careers.

The dam was Ben's career, and he worked at it now with desperate energy, and toil gave him sleep. It was wonderful to see the speed and majesty of the progress. Where there had been the wide, roiled water of the rapids, there came a great highway beneath whose broad platform the gigantic turbines were installed. Where there had been the ugly area of the de-watered riverbed and the litter of titanic disorder, there arose a temple of white grandeur housing vast dynamos, mystic looms where lightnings were gathered and spun and woven for distant markets.

Everything advanced with zest, and because everything was done with simplicity and directness for its own pure purposes, with no effort at oddity or adornment, originality or self-conscious posture, the result was beauty in its perfection. Sincerity and honesty and power gave power majesty and lifted this work of man into the godlike grandeur of a mountain or a noonday sun or an ocean.

There were countless little things to vary the day's work: a fight, a murder, an accidental death, the multitudinous follies of the two hundred thousand visitors that streamed through the works in a veritable human Mississippi.

One day seventy Bulgarian workmen resigned their jobs and marched down Main Street with their national flag above them. They had learned of the war with Greece and were on their way home to fight for their fatherland. Another day the Mayor greeted a bevy of eminent engineers from Japan, or from some other nation in the school geography.

There were love-affairs innumerable with all their ancient variations on the ancient theme. A hundred and seventy-six engineers took Carthage girls to wife and carried them off when the work was done.

But all these things were eddies in the steady current of the work. The weather and the river were so amiable that Craigie's only fear was the depletion of his funds before the completion of his task.

But everything went so well that he came within twenty-five thousand dollars of the entire amount, and his wife ended his despair on that score by mortgaging for just

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The Asylum On The Hill

MAN is a machine. His physical mechanism is subject to physical laws. He is not an exempt deity, but a wondrously made and delicately adjusted assemblage of living miracles called cells.

Many business and professional men rust in the brakes. Rusted brakes break and wreck the whole machine. Unused human brakes send men to the morgue, to the little green plot with a headstone, to the Asylum on the Hill. And the Asylum on the Hill is the saddest place in all the world.

All brakes are made to be used. There is nothing ornamental about them. Nature put a set of brakes in each of us. They are that instinct which every little while says "Stop, Look and Listen!", three words for which a railroad paid a great lawyer a fee of \$5,000. They are little words with a big meaning. They are the most efficient set of brakes in the world. Stop, Look and Listen! when human nerves are running on high.

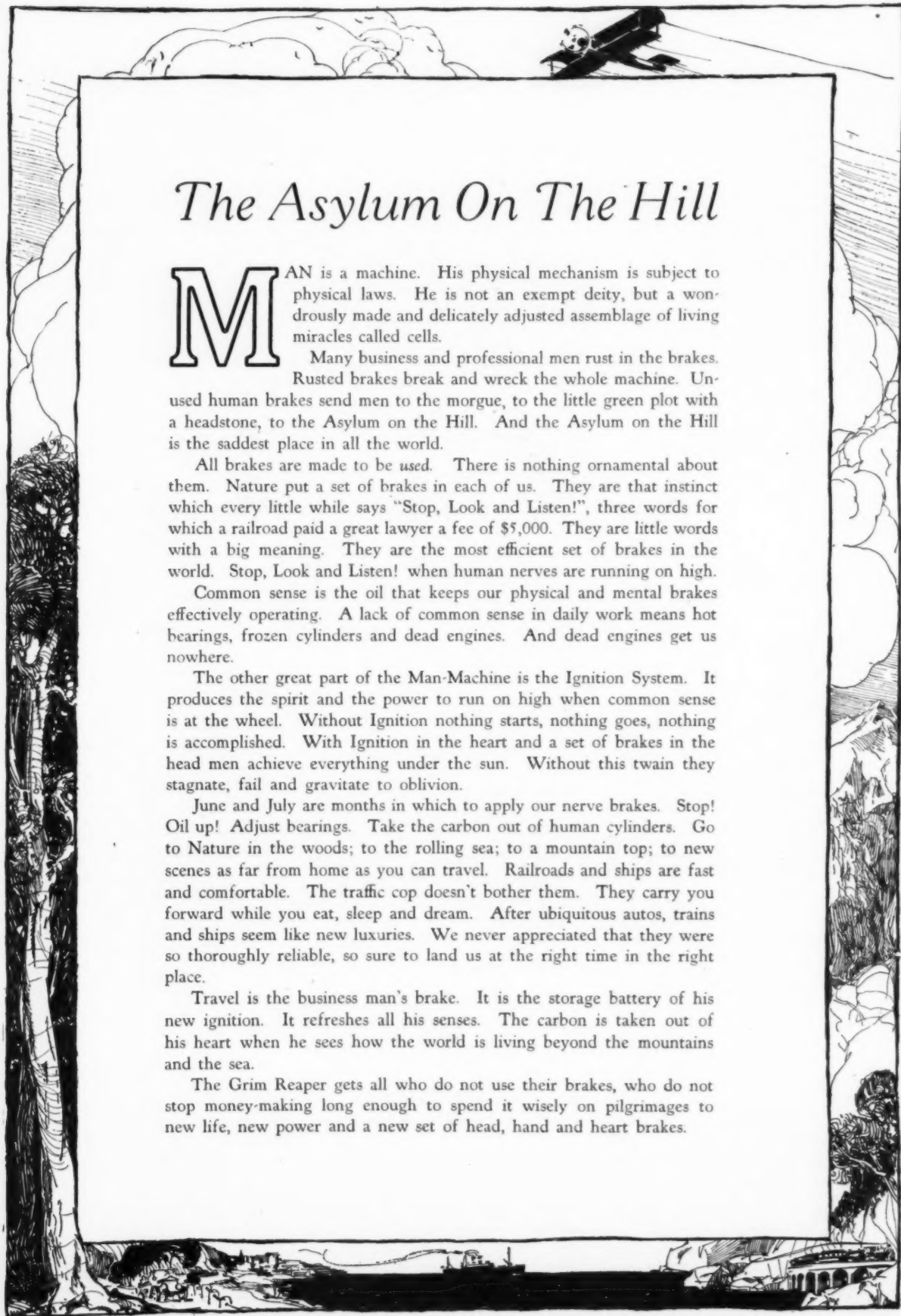
Common sense is the oil that keeps our physical and mental brakes effectively operating. A lack of common sense in daily work means hot bearings, frozen cylinders and dead engines. And dead engines get us nowhere.

The other great part of the Man-Machine is the Ignition System. It produces the spirit and the power to run on high when common sense is at the wheel. Without Ignition nothing starts, nothing goes, nothing is accomplished. With Ignition in the heart and a set of brakes in the head men achieve everything under the sun. Without this twain they stagnate, fail and gravitate to oblivion.

June and July are months in which to apply our nerve brakes. Stop! Oil up! Adjust bearings. Take the carbon out of human cylinders. Go to Nature in the woods; to the rolling sea; to a mountain top; to new scenes as far from home as you can travel. Railroads and ships are fast and comfortable. The traffic cop doesn't bother them. They carry you forward while you eat, sleep and dream. After ubiquitous autos, trains and ships seem like new luxuries. We never appreciated that they were so thoroughly reliable, so sure to land us at the right time in the right place.

Travel is the business man's brake. It is the storage battery of his new ignition. It refreshes all his senses. The carbon is taken out of his heart when he sees how the world is living beyond the mountains and the sea.

The Grim Reaper gets all who do not use their brakes, who do not stop money-making long enough to spend it wisely on pilgrimages to new life, new power and a new set of head, hand and heart brakes.



that sum the home he had builded for her and put in her name.

Once more all Carthage came forth on the ramparts to see the ousted river restored to his own. The long cofferdam from the Illinois shore was already a colonnade of submerged turbine-chambers, but the Iowa cofferdam still surrounded the thirty-five acres of borrowed river-bed.

Every stick of timber was cleared out, the railroad tracks torn up and carried off, the sheds and shanties whisked away, and only the foundations of the power-plant left in their clifflike bulk.

Then while the ice-mailed river waited, a trench was cut along the clay parapet until only two inches of mud held back the river. Craigie smote this with a spade, and a trickle of water ventured inquisitively through. The trickle became a runnel, a gush of searching water, tearing at the parapet from behind. The clay began to break, here and there; a brook—brooks, raged like mountain torrents.

An ice projectile crashed against the clay, and by permission broke it down. The river, in a mad hullabaloo of fury, poured a Niagara over the walls into the pit of the cofferdam. In five hours the pit was full, and the river restored to its level flowed unvexed to the sea again, paying at the toll-gate only a mite of its hitherto squandered power, twirling the exquisite stupendous turbines, and threading with electric zeal hundreds of miles of cables that had been hung meanwhile along lofty steel towers built in parade to Burlington forty miles north, and to St. Louis a hundred and fifty miles south.

The people of Carthage had dreamed that a vast metropolis would gather about the dam, and their dream may be granted to their posterity. But it was with the town as with the river.

After the builders of the dam had finished their visit, they departed to new conquests and innumerable destinies. Craigie invited Ben to go with him to the upper coast of Maine, where he and his brother were to make their next conquest of Nature. The harnessers of Niagara and of the Mississippi had perfected their plans for the most gigantic feat of man upon this globe. They advanced with confidence against "old ocean's gray and melancholy waste." They would trap the Atlantic in the deep reaches of the Bay of Fundy and release it at will, forcing the tides, inutile from the backward eternity, to light and heat and transport all New England's millions.

Ben was tempted mightily but he said at last:

"Carthage was always good enough for me. I'd be homesick anywhere I went. I guess I'll stay here and keep the old Mississippi company."

Craigie gave Ben a post of high importance in the power-plant, and went his way; and with him went all his caravan.

THE storm was over, the busy day was done, the strangers had gone. Carthage was a home-town once more in the after-glow and the beauty of peace.

It was Sunday seven days a week.

Now that there was no competition, Ben turned his eyes toward Odalea, wondering if she were lonely. He passed her porch. She called him in. They talked and talked. He asked her to come down and see the power-plant. He showed her all about that Louvre of the mechanic arts, that Vatican of scientific mysteries.

He took her for a long ride in the car he drove now, a mighty racer he had bought for half its value from one of the departing engineers. He took her for another ride. He called regularly. They rode regularly.

Habit is so insidious a thing that it tends to become a habit. A hundred times Ben resolved to tell Odalea that he loved her

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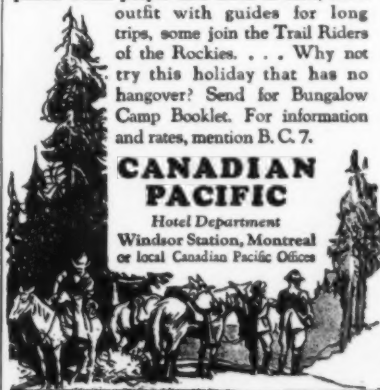
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with all his heart and strength, and all his years past and to come, and that he was at last able to offer her a home—a nice home, a little luxury, and a bit of travel now and then, perhaps a trip to France, whence Petunia was sending him glowing Gallic press-notices that Odalea translated to him.

But everything was so calm and sweet that it was hard to break out in a passion of love-talk. Finally the only reason that he did not ask Odalea to marry him was the fact that he had never asked her to. And this was growing into a permanent inhibition.

Odalea was likewise serenely comfortable in the drowsy beatitude of keeping house all day for her somnolent father and mother, and spending every evening in affectionate friendliness with Ben. They were like a fond old married couple, approaching their silver wedding. With decreasing frequency she made in solitude a firm resolve to say to Ben: "Marry me, and settle down." But they had settled down, and it would look silly to wring a proposal out of a man who was already playing Darby to her Joan.

ONE evening when Ben and Odalea were droning away on the Lail porch in the moonlight and gazing down at the never-paling splendor of the scene, Mrs. Budlong startled them by appearing and greeting them as if she had something on her mind.

She had begun to age with inactivity. There was almost nobody to give a party for nowadays. The dam that had been planned since before her birth was established there now, and would probably last as long as the world.

She had never cared much for scenery. That vast lake which had replaced the winding rapids, that giant's causeway across the river and that mile-wide cascade streaming with white water beneath it, that tall white cathedral ablaze with light—they were all very well as landscape. But society? What had become of society? And its functions? There were no more functions nowadays!

She spoke at last, and her polite prattle might have been a handful of thunderbolts, judging from its effect on Ben and Odalea. She observed with a laborious carelessness: "Oh, my dears! I've been wondering whether to have your wedding in my house or in my garden."

Ben took his feet off the porch-rail with a clump, and Odalea stopped rocking with a deafening silence. Mrs. Budlong purred on:

"A church-wedding would be nice, of course; but I should prefer to have you come to me, if you don't mind."

Ben had not been so frightened since he didn't know when. Odalea wondered if she were in the clutches of another bad dream. Mrs. Budlong was still saying things:

"My roses are very nice now, and we could fit up the arbor with ribbons and a floral bell. The bridesmaids could be dressed in big garden hats and wide skirts. I had thought of having some pretty children carrying flowers and strewing them before you."

"But of course, it might rain. It always rains when you don't want it to. Had you noticed that? So you might better have it in the house, don't you think so, or do you?"

If they were thinking, they gave no sign. She did not miss them:

"The clergyman—dear Doctor Soden, of course—could stand in the bay window, and— Oh, I thought of the sweetest thing! I won't have the wedding ring lost in the bridegroom's pocket. I'm sure you'd never find it, Mr. Webb. Men are so funny at that sweetly solemn hour."

"So I have decided to have the wedding-ring carried by a beautiful little girl. She will carry just one exquisite white calla lily, and the ring will rest on the stamens—or is it the pistils?"

But botany was the very least of their concerns.

"Well, anyway, the little girl will carry the ring for you, Mr. Webb, and when the moment comes for you to put it on the finger of the blushing bride—there it is! And no fishing for it in your vest—er, your waistcoat pocket. Sweet, what? Pretty, don't you think, my dear—my dears!"

Odalea and Ben were afraid to argue with her, so they merely glumpled. That was enough for Mrs. Budlong:

"Well, that's settled. Just let me know the date, and I'll do the rest. Good-night, my dears!"

And she was gone, leaving consternation behind her.

BEN was the first to speak. He was too dismayed to realize that his altruistic consideration for Odalea sounded less like meekness than insult:

"Good gosh! Ody, are you going to let that old harridan bully you into marrying a man you don't give a darn for?"

"No."

"Oh!"

It did not feel so pleasant to have her decline him so promptly. A long silence before he managed to ask:

"But how you going to get out of it?"

She stunned him with her answer:

"I'm going to marry you before she can spring her trap."

"You're goin' to what? Odalea!—what do you say? You wouldn't really marry me, would you? Or would you?"

"I've been wanting to for a hundred years."

THEY were married stealthily in a parsonage just in time to catch a packet to St. Louis. They boarded her as she came swanlike into the lock from the broad new lake. The upper gate swung shut, and the water-ports were opened. As the lock was emptied, the boat sank down and down till her upper deck was below the level of the green lawn. Then the vast lower gate opened, and the boat steamed out on the lower level. The bridge opened, and the packet steamed through.

Early in the second night the steamer drew up at the broad levee of St. Louis. The city was a splendor of brilliance, bright as a constellation in the Milky Way.

"And all that light comes down in wires from our little dam," said Ben, with a paternal pride. They went to their hotel in a taxicab, and he boasted that its batteries were charged with juice from Carthage. They whizzed past a vast lumbering street-car gleaming with brilliance, and he bragged again:

"And we run every single street-car in this—"

The driver set his brakes so hard that Ben and Odalea were all but shot headfirst through the front windows. And the street-car came to a stop with a piercing shriek of brakes, just in time to obey a tiny, elderly lady who wigwagged a minatory forefinger at the motorman.

As Odalea pointed, Ben gasped:

"Look, honey, there she is!"

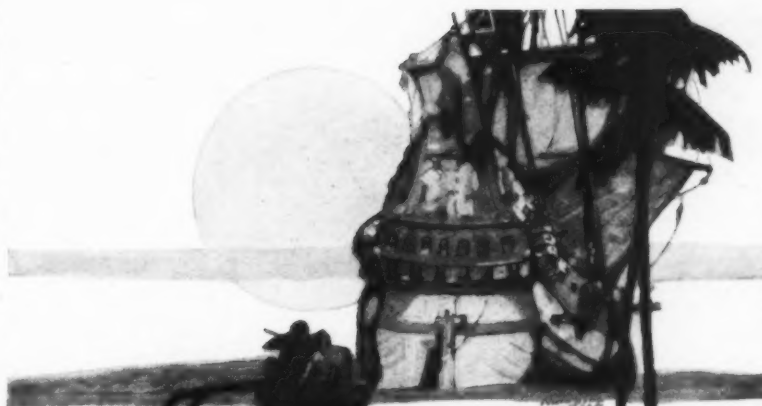
"There who is?"

"The little old woman stopping the street-car in Saint Loocy. There was a click in Carthage when she stopped it, and a little water was automatically shut off from one of the turbines."

The elderly person climbed aboard with the deliberation of a queen entering her coach. The conductor gave the motorman two bells. The street-car shot forward. Ben chuckled:

"There goes another click in Carthage! I remember my mother sayin' once: 'It's a lot of trouble to take for a little old woman.' I told Craigie, and you ought to've heard him laugh!"

THE END.



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T I D E S

(Continued from page 67)

"He's clever, isn't he?" his aunt inquired. "Yes, clever as all get-out. His mother claims he's a genius—tells him so—but as we haven't gone in for geniuses around this neighborhood, I can't judge." A faint, dry smile crossed his face, and he continued: "Years ago when we were kids and he came from New York to visit the Burchards, I thought he was the most wonderful boy I'd ever seen. He's a couple of years older than I am—that impressed me—and he's traveled a lot and knows how to do things with a flourish. I guess he and Blanche liked each other right from the beginning. You can't help liking him if he wants you to. He can make people like him even when they don't exactly approve of him. He'll be pleasant to you one day, and beastly the next, but you forgive him."

"Charm," suggested his aunt.

"Yes, that's what I've been trying to say. Don't you think, Aunt Martha, that a fellow with all that charm ought to be successful?"

"The trouble is," she replied, "that people with charm tend to trade on it. It's no more an index to character than style is."

"Not as much," put in the old man. "Style doesn't confuse us, and that is exactly what charm does: it confounds our judgment."

"I guess that's why he's always puzzled me," said Alan thoughtfully. "He's really gifted, though—I shouldn't be surprised if he'd do something remarkable some day, and I shouldn't be surprised, either, if some day I heard that he was in jail." He frowned and as if arguing with himself continued: "Well, anyway, he has some money of his own, and he's always been able to get whatever he wanted out of his mother, so they ought to be fairly comfortable."

"Yes," said Martha Wheelock, eager to perceive any favorable aspect of the case, "and she could hardly be worse off than she's been at home. She may have enough influence over him to make things turn out all right—don't you think so, Father?"

"I hope so," said the old man, but his tone was not encouraging, and her little effort at optimism was stilled, leaving her spirits at a lower level than before.

"I couldn't feel it more deeply," she said, "if Blanche were my own child. In fact I—" Her voice quavered, and she did not finish.

A GAIN from downstairs had come the blanketing sound of the front door, and now Harris, carrying under his arm an oblong package, entered the room.

"Father," he announced, laying the package on the bed, "I received some rather disconcerting news today, and it seems to me that—"

"We've heard about it," Martha broke in. "I got a letter from her this afternoon."

"You got a letter from her?" He looked surprised. "Why, I didn't know you knew her."

"Whom are you talking about?" she asked. "Mrs. Boddy."

"Oh, I thought you meant Blanche." Quickly she told him what had happened; but Harris, full of his own news, seemed hardly to hear, and after muttering a conventional expression of regret, he proceeded, addressing his father:

"Mrs. Boddy came into the office this morning with a lot of new complaints about the Napier Place property. She says she's going to leave when her lease is up, and I'm blessed if I know where we'll get anyone to replace her. Conditions down there seem to be worse than ever. The music from the house next door keeps her awake all night, and the police won't do anything about it."

While speaking he had opened the package on the bed, and now he lifted from their wrappings three old volumes bound in calf, and in a more cheerful tone continued:

"However, in the afternoon I had a stroke of luck that more than made up for everything. I heard of a man away out on the West Side that had some old books for sale, and when I went out there, what do you think I found? A first of Boswell's 'Johnson' and a Kilmarnock 'Burns' in the original calf and in perfect condition!" Gently and with a kind of ecstasy he laid one volume of the Boswell in Zenas Wheelock's lap. "Just look at it, Father. There's hardly a page that's foxed, and I got the three for a hundred and thirty dollars!"

Harris lighted the oil lamp on the table beside his father's chair, and the old man turned a few pages of the book.

"Very nice," he said, as if speaking to a child.

But Harris was not satisfied with such casual treatment of his treasure, and he continued to exhibit it, demanding appreciation of the binding, the frontispiece portrait of Dr. Johnson, the old wavy paper and the quaint and dignified typography. "This is the real first," he proclaimed. "You see the date is 1791 and the word 'give' is misspelled on page 135. That makes it worth nearly double." Nor was that all, for having displayed the Boswell, he insisted upon a no less thorough inspection of the precious Burns.

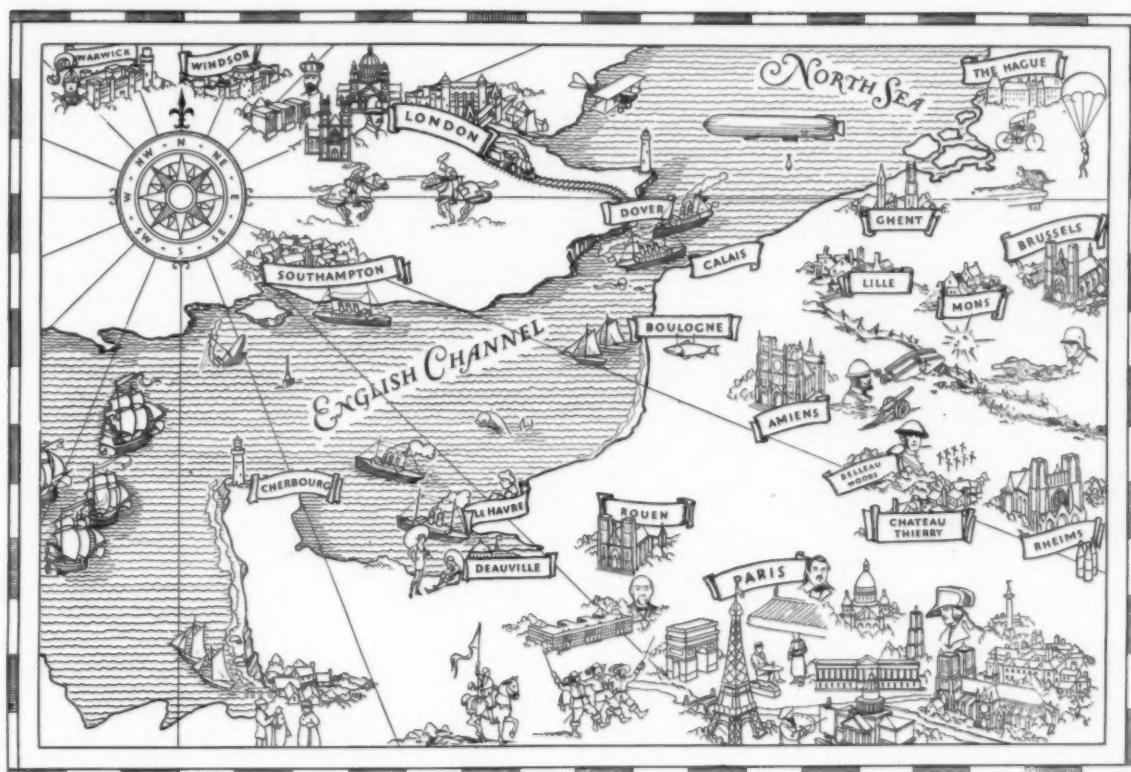
MEANWHILE Martha had dropped into a chair and was gazing blankly at the wall. After a time she looked up at Alan suddenly, and there was in her eyes an intently questioning expression, as if she wondered whether he perceived the inward significance of the little scene between his father and his grandfather. A fleeting smile, like an exchange of confidences, passed between them; and that smile started in Alan's mind a train of thought that ended, as trains of thought often do, far, apparently, from its starting-point.

For some reason which he could not have explained, his thoughts turned to college, and he found himself looking back over his first year, now almost ended, and trying to estimate its value. It had been a pleasant and not unprofitable year, yet somehow he wasn't satisfied. Why had he gone to college? Because it seemed to be the thing to do if you could manage it. Throughout the country there was a growing convention in favor of higher education for boys and girls, and colleges were springing up everywhere. College might be all right if you had the time and money, but time and money were beginning to look more valuable to him, and he was turning the matter over in his mind when his thoughts were interrupted by Delia, in the doorway, announcing that Miss Leta wished to see Mr. Alan. (Good old Delia—she tried so hard to remember to call him "Mister.")

Catching a look of surprise on Miss Martha's face, she was quick to interpret and answer it, explaining with a wide Irish smile: "She wouldn't come in. She's waitin' on the porch."

"I'll be right down," answered Alan, but instead of immediately following Delia he hesitated, glancing at Blanche's letter in his hand. "If you don't mind," he said to his aunt without looking at her, "I'll keep this awhile. I—I didn't read it very carefully."

She assented; and Alan, murmuring a word of thanks, thrust the letter into his breast pocket and hastened from the room. Reaching the foot of the stairs, he saw that the front door was standing slightly ajar, and when he opened it, a shaft of



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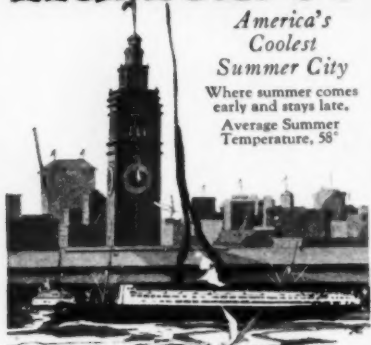
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light from the hall chandelier revealed Leta with the dry leaves of the honeysuckle vine forming a shadowy curtain behind her.

"What made you wait out here?" he asked. "Wont you come in?"

"Oh, no, thanks—really!" Nervously she shifted her weight from one foot to the other. "I hope your aunt wont think I'm bold, coming round to your house like this, but Mother and I just heard—heard the news, and supper's about ready, so there wasn't time to send a note. We realize you must be pretty upset, and we thought it might take your mind off things if you'd just come over and have supper at our house. Somebody sent us some prairie-chickens, and Mother thought—"

"It's awfully kind of you, Leta," he said, "but—" He stopped, unable to find words which, without making him seem ungrateful to the point of rudeness, would tell her that he wished to be alone this evening.

"Of course," she assured him quickly, "if you don't want to come, I'll quite understand. You mustn't feel as if you had to explain."

Alan was touched. Moreover, this embarrassment made her very pretty, heightening the color of her cheeks where the little curls brushed them, and causing her blue eyes, gravely regarding him, to appear unusually large.

"It's awfully kind of you," he said again. "Why, yes, I'd like to. Do come in just a second, wont you?"

But Leta resolutely shook her head and started down the steps.

"Wont you even wait while I get my hat?" he asked, laughing.

"I'll walk on slowly."

He called upstairs telling his aunt where he was going, and dashing out, caught up with Leta. When they had passed the gate, her arm crept into his, and as they moved on through the darkness he felt her hand travel down his coat sleeve to his palm. He closed his fingers over hers.

"Never mind!" she whispered.

It was comforting to be with Leta.

Chapter Twenty-one

WHETHER because of restlessness during the spring months following Blanche's elopement, or because of the sudden realization of his father's futility, Alan's plans changed before the end of his first year at Northwestern University.

Under the magic of Rockefeller millions, and more millions contributed by diverse wealthy citizens, the new University of Chicago, facing the Midway Plaisance, was now all but ready to open, and because of its accessibility from Oakland, he had thought seriously of transferring thither when classes began in the autumn. But by June—the June of Grover Cleveland's third nomination, which took place at the then new Coliseum, near the World's Fair grounds—he had decided otherwise; and midsummer saw him entered as a student at a downtown business college, where, besides shorthand, typewriting and bookkeeping, economics and business law were taught.

Often when the weather was not too hot he would ride to the business college on his safety, joining the great stream of cyclists in which a few dogged veterans on high wheels were now anachronisms. Horsemen and pedestrians bitterly complained of the "bicycle craze," as it was called, and "scorchers" were being arrested; yet the vogue of the wheel was steadily growing, some women, even, having taken it up in spite of hampering skirts.

One woman rider, Sophie Schoen, a tall, supple girl with massed gold hair and incredibly fair skin, sat next to Alan in the shorthand class. Sophie lived on Thirty-first

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Street; sometimes Alan would meet her by chance on Michigan Avenue and ride with her to school, and often they would start home together in the evening. She was amiable, not too well educated, and rather lazy; shorthand she loathed, and she would chew her pencil and frown as she tried to read her notes; but always as they started home, color would come into her cheeks, and her blue eyes would brighten.

"I used to hate Sunday," she told Alan one afternoon as they rode up the broad avenue; "it's such a stupid day; but I just love it now because a fellow in our building's got a tandem-bike and takes me out. Last week we rode to Pullman and took our lunch with us, but it's awfully awkward for a girl, so I'm getting me a divided skirt. Mamma's shocked with me 'cause it only comes to the tops of my gaiters, but if she had to ride a bicycle, she'd see." Her tone, at once inquiring and defensive, told him she was wondering what he thought.

"I'm sure you'll look nice in it," he said. "You always look mighty nice in everything." And he spoke the truth, for though her clothes were of the simplest, Sophie Schoen was a prettily made girl and carried herself with an indolent grace that gave her a style entirely her own. Watching her as she moved about or sat frowning over her notes, Alan would wonder what it was about the nape of her neck, and the white skin of her forearm showing in the little slit above her cuff, that so seduced his eye. She suggested physical strength curiously combined with lassitude, and it was perhaps this lassitude that made her seem to lack self-confidence.

"I'd ask you in for some lemonade or something," she said to him one hot September afternoon as they pedaled toward the corner of the street on which she lived, "but I guess you wouldn't enjoy it. My folks are perfectly respectable and all that, but I guess they aren't just the kind you're used to."

Alan felt sorry for her.

"If that's an invitation," he answered with a little smile, "I'd love to come."

As they rode across Thirty-first Street, she continued to explain apologetically about her family and the way they lived: "My father runs a barber-shop, and our flat's upstairs; it's just a little bit of a place, and we haven't any—"

"Does he collect cigarette-pictures?" Alan suddenly broke in.

"Why, yes. How did you know?" She was gazing at him in surprise.

"Your name, and the neighborhood. It's funny I didn't think of it before. I sold him my collection, long ago."

"Goodness gracious," exclaimed Sophie as they alighted in front of her father's shop, "how small the world is, after all!"

HAVING placed their bicycles in the rack near the cigar-store Indian outside the door of the barber-shop, they entered a dark, narrow hall scented with the smell of cooking cabbage, and ascended to the floor above, where Sophie ushered him into a tiny parlor, papered in dark red. On a table at the center of the room stood a gas lamp, connected by a rubber tube with a fixture above, and beside the lamp a cornet and a photograph album with a heart-shaped mirror set in the center of its scarlet plush cover.

"Mamma!" shouted Sophie, but there was no answer, and she led the way through a cramped dining-room to a shadowy little corridor at the end of which was a kitchen about the size of a box-stall. In the kitchen Sophie seemed at home; while she squeezed lemons, Alan cracked the ice, washed it, and dropped it into a glass pitcher.

"It's cooler in the parlor," she declared when the lemonade was ready, and though Alan attempted to carry the tinkling pitcher, she insisted upon taking it. As they passed

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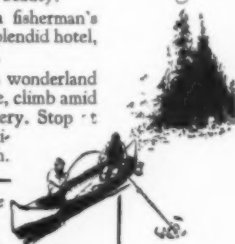
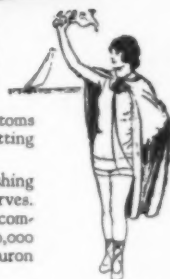
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through the narrow doorway into the dim little hall, he was pleasantly aware of the fragrance of “New-mown Hay” and of Sophie’s shoulder touching his arm; and when again he felt the contact as they moved into the dining-room, he knew that Sophie noticed, too, for she glanced at him and looked quickly away, murmuring: “Oh, excuse me.”

FOR some reason they found little to say as they sat on the short sofa in the bay window of the parlor and drank their lemonade, and when at the sound of footsteps on the stair outside, Sophie quickly removed herself to an adjacent rocking-chair, Alan felt so self-conscious that he feared his state of mind might be observed by Mr. Schoen, who now entered, looking, Alan thought, exactly as he had looked seven years earlier.

“Wo ist deine Mamma?” he asked Sophie. “Ich weiss nicht. Sie ist nicht hier,” she answered, and in English continued: “This is Mr. Wheelock. He goes to the business college and he says he sold you some cigarette-pictures or something.”

Schoen slid his spectacles down to the end of his nose, and over the tops of them scrutinized Alan’s face.

“I don’t remember you,” he declared, whereat Sophie looked embarrassed.

“It was a long time ago,” said Alan, to which the barber replied:

“I think so. You collect also postage-stamps, young man?”

Alan answered that he did not, and the other continued: “My main collecting is stamps. Cigarette-pictures is only my sideline. I show you.” He dived under the fringed edge of the magenta table-cover and from a shelf produced two cigar-boxes containing the colored pasteboards—an enormous lot of them strapped in sets with rubber bands, which he slipped off, running the pictures over for Alan’s inspection. Some of his sets—“Flags of all Nations,” “Fifty Fish from American Waters,” “Birds of America,” “City Flags,” “Playing Cards,” and “Leaders of the World”—he told Alan, with pride, were complete; and he believed he had every soldier-picture issued with Sweet Caporal cigarettes. The latter interested Alan most, for among the soldiers he recognized not a few as having once been his. Likewise he recalled vividly some of the “Beauties of the World,” and he was inspecting them when a bundle of pictures slipped from Mr. Schoen’s hand and scattered over the crimson-flowered carpet.

“Mein Gott!” exclaimed the barber, and all three bent to gather up the pictures.

Actresses!

Even more than “nickel novels” dealing with the adventures of *Diamond Dick* and other reckless characters, these tiny photographs of women of the stage had been taboo among the Oakland youth of Alan’s generation. The two boys in the public school who had collected them came from west of Cottage Grove Avenue, and it was their habit, when showing them, to retire into corners, snickering. Picking up the pictures, with Sophie at his side, Alan was embarrassed, but Schoen felt no such delicacy; and when, in the course of reassembling the pack, he came upon a specimen that particularly pleased him—a recalcitrant “boy” of extravagance, wearing tights and an hour-glass bodice—he called Alan’s attention to it, exclaiming:

“Ach, but she’s a voluptuous woman! Dot’s a hair of leks dot is leks!”

“Why, Pappa!” Either Sophie was shocked by the anatomical allusion, or she was afraid it would shock Alan; moving away from the table, she drew aside a starched lace window-curtain and appeared to look out upon the street; but her disapproval did not daunt her father, who winked broadly at Alan, and began to show him a series entitled “Beautiful Bathers,” depicting



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damsels of incredible shapeliness posing on the beach in costumes that could have existed only in the fancy of a dissolute lithographer—for they were minus sleeves, skirts and stockings.

After making a polite pretense of examining the racy cards, Alan turned again to the military pictures, running them over and noting his favorites of long ago.

"I sold you more than a hundred of these," he told the proprietor of the collection, "and I certainly hated to part with them, but I needed the money."

Something in the phrase must have set up an echo in Mr. Schoen's memory, for after gazing intently into Alan's face he cried: "Vy, sure! You're dot boy came to my shop von day so grazly to sell. Vy sure, now I rememper. Gott, you vas comigal!" He laughed, slapping his knee.

Sophie meanwhile had been wandering restlessly about, now straightening a picture on the dining-room wall, now returning to the parlor and changing the position of various small articles on the mantelpiece—a photograph in a red plush frame, a shepherd lad of tinted china, a brown glass fish, a silver slipper containing a pincushion, and a conch-shell on which was painted a sailboat. Meanwhile she hummed abstractedly, and once, in a low voice, she sang two bars of the song:

"After the ball is o-ver
After the break of day—"

When presently her father took up his cornet and began fingering the stops she looked disturbed, and Alan, feeling that Mr. Schoen had done quite enough to entertain him, quickly made his adieus. Sophie, however, followed him to the outer hall, and as the air was rent by a wailing blast from the musical instrument, closed the door behind her.

"I'm sorry," she said meekly. "I guess you wont want to come again." She was standing close to him, and once more he was aware of the scent of New-mown Hay.

"Nonsense," he replied as he started down the stairs, "of course I will." He tried to speak convincingly but he was not sure that he did wish to return. He was vaguely sorry for Sophie. In spite of her prettiness she was pathetic, arousing in him a protective instinct that seemed, when you considered it, rather senseless, since there was nothing from which she needed protection. But what had that to do with the question whether or not he should go to see her again? After all, there was no special reason why he shouldn't go sometimes if he felt like it.

Emerging into the daylight he took his bicycle from the rack beside the painted Indian effigy. The shabby street, the barber-shop and its proprietor were apparently untouched by the seven years that had passed since he came here to sell his cigarette pictures. How he had suffered at parting with them, and how one's sense of values changed! Those little colored prints of soldiers in wooden attitudes now seemed to him entirely absurd—except for the memories they called back.

RIDING homeward Alan thought of the friendship ring and of the evening when he followed Blanche through the gate and gave it to her. It didn't seem so very long ago, yet the gate was gone, the lindens that used to overhang the fence were gone, the very garden where he had given her the ring was gone—buried under Luke Holden's flat building. And Blanche was married and living in New York. But she still had the ring.

He wondered whether Blanche and Ray would come back next spring for the World's Fair. He should think Ray would want to see his father's building, and he knew that the Norcrosses were urging them to come,

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but Blanche seemed to feel that it would be awkward unless her father got over being angry at her, and there didn't seem to be much hope of that, for since coming home, Luke had been more sullen than ever.

Even if Blanche and Ray did come back to the Fair, they wouldn't stay long in Chicago. Blanche's letters made that clear. Ray, she wrote, was determined to live in New York, where, apparently, both of them were very happy.

In one of her letters to Martha she described their rooms, with windows looking over roofs to the Hudson River. When she had finished her housework, she would sit and watch the steamers going up and down. She and Ray had safeties with pneumatic tires and they took long rides into the country when Ray wasn't working. But generally he worked hard, and they were elated because he had sold two verses to a humorous paper called *Life*. Perhaps after all Ray was settling down, and would be a success and make Blanche happy.

Pedaling along, he fell to thinking of New York, wondering what it was like, and how it would seem to live there. It must be pretty hard to leave the place where you'd grown up and go to a strange city. Just the same, he'd like to see New York.

As he neared home, he reflected on the changes in the neighborhood since Blanche went away. Luke Holden's flat-building, the "Florence," projecting to the sidewalk's edge, cut off the view of the Wheelock house and destroyed the symmetry of the street. On the corner above, another flat-building was rising; the only remaining vacant lot on that side of the way was being turned into a tennis club, and Jersey Belle, the one cow left, was making a last brave stand in the back yard.

Alan wasn't quite accustomed to the "Florence" even yet. Until the lindens were cut down, he hadn't realized their softening effect. Without them the boxlike form of his grandfather's house was mercilessly revealed, and the color seemed somehow to have faded out of the paint, leaving a clap-boarded rectangle, like a pale physiognomy with dull eyes, confronting the brick sidewalk of what Zenas Wheelock, noting the name carved on the lintel, called "Luke Holden's Taj Mahal."

Chapter Twenty-two

SELDOM in the history of human settlements has it been possible to discern the precise moment at which a gawky, gangling town attains the actual state of cityhood; but in the case of Chicago the date and hour may be named. Incorporated in 1837, when wolves howled in the winter streets, Chicago was for fifty-six years technically a city before it gained the poise and power and ruthless pride that are the attributes of every great metropolis.

The sudden metamorphosis began at precisely nine o'clock on the rainy morning of May the first, 1893, when a brass band, stationed before the Lexington Hotel, broke into sound and action, and regardless of raw gusts and showers, stepped briskly up Michigan Avenue to the spirited tune of Sousa's "Washington Post March," which set prancing the horse of the procession's leader, General Nelson A. Miles, who in his yellow sash, gold epaulettes and magnificent cocked hat, would hardly have been recognized by Geronimo, his captive of a few years earlier.

Behind the General came his regulars, cavalry and artillery, escorting President Cleveland and the Duke of Veragua, grandee of Spain and lineal descendant of an Italian mariner, one Cristoforo Colombo, who, four hundred years and six months prior to this day, discovered a certain island which he named San Salvador.

Brass bands, silk hats and carriages. The World's Columbian Exposition! Brass bands, silk hats and carriages. The largest building on earth! Brass bands, silk hats and carriages. The greatest Fair ever seen in the universe! And so forth.

Shortly after the hour of noon on the same day, before a quarter of a million people in the Court of Honor, a special air was played by a band of five hundred pieces, a special prayer was prayed, and a special poem recited; whereafter the President, touching a button, set the engines going, the fountains spouting, the flags flying.

So the Fair was opened. And with the Fair, Chicago crowned herself a city, announcing to the world that her splendors and her horrors alike were now gigantically urban.

EVEN the river, remembered by Zenas Wheelock as a limpid, reed-grown stream, had become urban. It was now a sewer hemmed in by grimy wharves, warehouses, factories and lumber-yards, and coated with a film of slime which, cut by the shipping, drifted into stagnant corners, where it caked, forming a floor of matted grease and flotsam over which ran enormous rats inhabiting the piling.

The forking of this malodorous current divided the city, like Gaul, into three parts, but these parts were closely linked. Under the river, cable cars bored their wormlike way, while across innumerable bridges rattled an ever-swelling traffic, checked at intervals by autocrats perched in the iron framework, who, during the season of navigation, turned the bridges, giving temporary right of passage to bluff-bowed cargo-boats and spindle-masted schooners, the latter towed by tugs from which came sounds of inner anguish and a vomit of black smoke.

The smoke was wholly metropolitan. Rising from tugs and steamers, it blended with the sable plumes of a thousand chimneys and a thousand shunting trains, creating, when the air hung heavy above the city, a haze through which the sun appeared a sickly yellow blur. And as water drawn skyward in the form of mist descends as rain, so from this murky pall there fell in a gentle but persistent shower, the black snow of industrialism, smudging downtown buildings to a neutral grayness through which emerged dimly the tints of brick, stone or paint, and griming impartially the collars of young clerks and their employers, the hands of working women and the brave white gloves of ladies in victorias.

Abetted by erratic winds, streamers of smoke made swift excursions through the city, now flying down the market district of South Water Street, bright with fruit and vegetables; now touring adjacent blocks to the eastward where the air was fragrant with spices and fresh-roasted coffee; now soaring aloft to streak past the topmost windows of that twenty-story marvel the Masonic Temple, tallest building in the world; now joining forces with the little locomotives of the new South Side Elevated Railroad to visit the reeking shambles of the stockyards, and the unhallowed district to the west of Oakland, whence came the "Micks." Or again our vagrant wisp of smoke might follow the Illinois Central Railroad along the south shore of the lake, and reinforced at intervals by passing trains, skim wraith-like over the stone buildings of the great new university on the Midway, or attaining the World's Fair grounds, not far distant, spend itself in a final, hopeless effort to dim the splendor of those shimmering palaces.

The period of the Chicago World's Fair marked not only the birth of a great city, but the close of an era which, though not free from disturbances, had, by contrast with the era following, the flavor of a pastoral.

Whittier, Lowell, Louisa May Alcott, E. P. Roe, James G. Blaine, General Sherman, Jefferson Davis, Henry Ward Beecher, Phillips Brooks, Cyrus W. Field, George W. Childs, Jay Gould, Edwin Booth, Albani, P. T. Barnum, Jumbo, "The Black Crook," Maud S., and Sitting Bull had but recently faded out of the American picture; Mark Twain, William Dean Howells, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, George W. Cable, Julia Ward Howe, James Whitcomb Riley, Eugene Field, Ella Wheeler Wilcox, Bishop Potter, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Mrs. Potter Palmer, Rockefeller, Carnegie, Edison, Whistler, Theodore Thomas, Emma Eames, Ada Rehan, John Drew, Loie Fuller, Buffalo Bill, Nellie Bly, "Pop" Anson, John L. Sullivan, "Gentleman Jim" Corbett, the Dime Museum, the G. A. R., Richard Croker, Ward McAllister and the "400" were in sharp focus; while emerging or soon to emerge were William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, Lieutenant Peary, Augustus Saint Gaudens, Stanford White, John Singer Sargent, Frederick Remington, Charles Dana Gibson, Richard Harding Davis, "Chimmie Fadden" Townsend, Maude Adams, Lillian Russell, Weber & Fields, Debs, Coxey's Army, the "coon song," the "hootchy-kootchy" and the W. C. T. U.

In Hawaii the old Queen Liliuokalani had been deposed, and in Holland the young Queen Wilhelmina had ascended the throne; in Siam the first train had been run, and in America James J. Hill had built the Pacific Extension of his Great Northern Railroad; in India the free coinage of silver had been abandoned as unsound, and in the United States it was beginning to be advocated by the "boy orator" Bryan.

THE industrial age, the age of trusts, machinery, strikes and speed, was started. The "Exposition Flyer" dashed from New York to Chicago in the record time of eighteen hours; the bicycle craze was bringing about highway improvement, and a Detroit madman by the name of Henry Ford was fooling with a horseless carriage which sometimes actually ran; the phonograph was in existence; a man named Eastman had invented a flexible photographic film and an instantaneous magazine camera, the "kodak;" and with this flexible film Edison was experimenting on a machine he called a cinematograph by means of which he hoped to project photographs in motion.

On the South Side of Chicago a street-car line was now being operated by means of an overhead trolley; the electric light, the telephone and the typewriting machine were well established, though to be sure some people of the older generation refused to traffic with such innovations.

Among these conservatives was Colonel Burchard, who, though he remained at home with his family during the summer of the Fair, always with a house full of guests, seemed mildly to resent the great upheaval. The Colonel's house, across the way from the Wheellocks', represented in their minds a kind of fortress, one place at least that stood secure against the forces of change. By contrast with the narrowing lots of the last decade, the Burchard grounds took on a look of even greater spaciousness; the carefully tended shrubbery and trees, the handsome flower-beds, the iron children of the fountain with water trickling over their umbrella, and above all the brick house, stalwart and quietly imposing, seemed to defy the outlander and guarantee the maintenance of Oakland's neighborhood tradition. Unlike Zenas Wheelock, Colonel Burchard had recognized the annexation of Oakland by the city, a few years earlier, by selling his cow, but though the eye of a knowing horseman could readily detect in his pair of trotters the signs of age, they were still able to make good time among the bicycles on the boulevards

when the Colonel drove to and from his office.

On leaving college several years earlier, Tom Burchard had gone to work in his father's lumber business; lately he had been made a partner in the firm and was becoming more and more active in its management; but the Colonel, nearing seventy, was hale and active, and though he seldom visited the lumber-yard, he still went daily to the office which for many years he had maintained in a building near the Board of Trade. Here, with the aid of Haskins, an old clerk, he administered a considerable business.

INDIRECTLY it was the World's Fair that set Alan Wheelock to work in this office, called in to substitute for Haskins, who had been stepped upon by a camel at the very door of that pavilion on the "Streets of Cairo" in which "Little Egypt" did her more than dubious dance.

"If I only hadn't gone to the 'lang place!" he kept saying to the Colonel when the latter, hearing of the event, hastened to see him at St. Luke's. "It's no place for a decent man—and what will you ever do without me while the bone's setting?"

Six weeks later the old clerk, leaning on a cane, returned to the office, to find the Colonel, whose letters had hitherto been written in longhand, a convert to stenography; and as Haskins, after critical inspection of the books, was obliged to admit that

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they had been satisfactorily kept, the Colonel presently contrived to draw from him the suggestion that Alan be retained. This he accomplished by complaining of his eyes and of the difficulty of writing by hand, and also by encouraging Haskins to dictate letters to Alan, and send him out to make collections and do other errands; and any jealousy Haskins might have felt was removed when the Colonel, instead of himself making the announcement, authorized him to inform Alan that his position was now permanent. Somehow, too, the Colonel managed, without explicit statement of the situation, to make Alan realize that a man of Haskins' years and condition might be sensitive concerning his prerogatives. Alan was therefore on his guard; he scrupulously maintained the attitude of a subordinate, and the visible expansion of Haskins under this treatment gave him quiet amusement and at the same time taught him something about business and about human nature.

Except for a few days following the first of the month, work at the office was not heavy; often Alan was able to get out to the Fair before evening, sometimes accompanying his grandfather and his aunt, sometimes with Leta, occasionally with Sophie. Now and then Leta would meet him downtown and they would voyage to the Fair Grounds on the whaleback *Christopher Columbus*, arriving in time to watch the miraculous transition as the glow of sunset upon western walls turned from flame-color to

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"The Lost Adventure"

Bronco-busting and such-like were just croquet to Jiminy Smith, and so he took a job to double for movie actors in hazardous stunts—and for once got all the excitement he wanted. The story of Jiminy, "The Lost Adventure," along with nineteen other good ones is in the current June issue of

**THE BLUE BOOK
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rose and purple, fading until, at a magic moment, a million lights on bridges, cornices and towers flashed to incandescence. In the Court of Honor, with its swaying banners, its sculptured fountains sending lacy jets on high, and the lake blue and shadowy beyond the snowy columns of the peristyle, night fell with incredible splendor, but Alan and Leta liked best to spend this hour in a gondola moving swanlike through the lagoons.

One Saturday afternoon in September while they were dining at "Old Vienna," listening to Ziehrer's band and watching the curiously assorted crowd, Alan heard a familiar laugh, and looking up saw Sophie. She was accompanied by a stocky man whose hair showed gray beneath the brim of his jauntily tilted hat, and Alan had never seen her so becomingly attired.

From the day when he first saw her frowning over her shorthand book, Sophie had held for him a charm unlike anything he had known before. Until he met her, he had supposed that a strong attraction must necessarily be accompanied by respect, but the strain of weakness in her character, prohibiting respect, had seemed actually to draw him to her. He was sorry for her; yet the protective instinct she had kindled in him—an instinct fundamentally creditable—had been, paradoxically, the very thing that made him fail to protect her against herself. That she had encouraged him to embrace her was no excuse. If she was weak, so had he been weak—doubly so, for, having made up his mind not to see her again, he had repeatedly gone back, each time saying to himself that this must be the end. Still later he had harbored a belief that when they should leave the business college the affair would automatically be terminated. But Sophie had found out where he worked, and at intervals she telephoned asking him to call, saying she was in difficulties and wanted his advice. Once when she called up, he was alone in the office, but when he asked her to tell him what the trouble was, she said she couldn't—she must see him.

Perhaps she had been sincere in saying she wanted his advice the time she lost her job, but he wondered whether it was true that her new employer, a married man, was in love with her, or whether the tale had been invented to disturb him. Sophie seemed to like to keep him worried, and though instinct told him his concern for her was wasted, the sight of her, or the sound of her sweet, drawing voice, was enough to throw him off his balance, so potent was that spurious charm of hers.

NOW as he rose and greeted her, there came to his nostrils the scent of New-mown Hay, her favorite perfume.

"Where have you been all this time?" she asked, coquettishly reproachful. "Why haven't you been to see me?"

He murmured something about being busy, and as Sophie's escort hurried her along, dropped into his seat again, and glanced at Leta, who was measuring Sophie with her eyes.

"Who's that?" she asked.

"A girl I knew in business college."

"What's her name?"

He told her, wishing he had mentioned Sophie to her long ago. He had intended to, but had put it off—at first because the subject never seemed naturally to introduce itself, and later because it was distasteful.

"She called you Alan," said Leta.

"We sat at the same table in the shorthand class for months," he said defensively as they rose.

"Just you two?"

"Of course not. There were six of us."

They crossed the courtyard, and passing through the gate turned onto the Midway.

"She said you'd been to see her," pursued Leta presently.

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"No," he corrected, "she asked why I hadn't been to see her."

"She meant lately," declared Leta, and to that he was obliged to agree.

"I've often thought of telling you about her, but somehow I didn't get around to it." He hesitated, then added lamely: "Not that there's anything much to tell." And as Leta was silent, he continued: "She's pathetic. They live in—" But there she checked him, repeating in a scornful voice: "Pathetic!"

"Well, she is!"

"Hm-m!" said Leta dryly, and they continued through the crowd of merrymakers, without speaking.

"I don't see why you're acting this way, Leta," he told her after a time.

"What way? What have I done?"

"You aren't being very nice to me."

"Perhaps I'd better go home, then." She stopped walking, but at that he became voluble with protests.

"Don't be ridiculous! You're not going home or anything of the kind. We'll finish the evening as we planned."

Meekly enough, it seemed, Leta moved on with him toward the landing-place, where presently they stepped into a gondola.

THE lights of distant buildings, mirrored in the smoke-colored water, exploded into glittering fragments with each ripple, and painted the canopy above them with a luminous and shifting moiré. An electric launch slipped by, and after it was gone they felt its wake, and heard the hollow sound of little waves slapping at the prow of their craft. The Wooded Island hung like a dark cloud on the lagoon, and by the time they drew into its shadow, Alan was spellbound by the beauty of the night and the illusory sense of solitude. Here the silence between Leta and himself seemed fitting, and bemused as he was, he had all but forgotten their recent discord, when she spoke:

"You've had her out here at the Fair, too, haven't you?"

Her words, breaking in upon his reverie, showing him that all this time she had been nursing her resentment, exasperated him; nor was his exasperation in any wise diminished by the accuracy of her conjecture.

"Yes, I have," he challenged, facing her in the darkness, "and what of it? Whose business is it, anyway?"

But no reply came, and when he heard sounds that told him she was weeping he was filled with contrition. How kind she had always been to him, how thoughtful, generous, loyal! There flashed into his mind the memory of the consolation she had given him at the theater, long ago, when Blanche was sitting in a box with Ray; and of that other evening, last year, when the news of Blanche's elopement came, and Leta called for him and took him home with her for dinner. For a long time now they had been going together like this, and never once had she let him doubt that he came first with her. How could he have brought himself to carry on with Sophie? And how, having done so, could he have blamed Leta for being hurt?

"Oh, Leta," he begged, "don't! Please don't cry! I'm awfully sorry! It was a beastly thing to say! I wouldn't hurt you for the world, Leta—not for the world! Please, please!" In the obscurity he fumbled for her hand; but when he found it, she drew it violently away.

"Leta! Please, dear, please! I can't tell you how sorry I am!"

"But it's true!" she answered in a choking voice. "It's perfectly true! It isn't any of my business! That's the worst of it!"

"No," he insisted, "you were perfectly right! It is your business! You have every right to blame me! Don't cry, Leta, dear! Give me your hand!" Again he tried to take it; this time he found it wet with tears.

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"No!" she cried. "I'm a fool! I've made a fool of myself—that's what I've done! You can go with anyone you please—wherever you like—and I have nothing to say! Nothing at all, and I know it! Oh, I've been a fool, a fool!"

He flung his arm about her, and holding her close to him felt her body shivering with sobs.

"No, Leta! I'm the one that's been a fool—but that's all over. Just forgive me, and you'll see! You'll see! Tell me that you forgive me!" He put his hand under her chin and lifting her face, looked down into it, trying to discover some sign of her relenting.

Presently she ceased to move, and with a sigh, relaxed. Her eyes opened, looking up at him; her hand lightly touched his cheek, and through the dimness he saw that she was smiling.

TWO FLIGHTS UP

(Continued from page 53)

Well, let her be scared. She had got them all into a pretty mess. She and her finelady ways and her shallow, unscrupulous mind. Only, she wasn't going to involve Holly; he'd damn well take care of that.

He heard Holly go into her mother's room and the door close; and leaving his own door open, he sat down in the worn chair by his empty hearth and waited as patiently as he could. He had an idea, possibly unfounded, that to turn on his lights would be to bring a ring at the bell and perhaps a warrant for his arrest. Yet there were moments as he sat there when the whole situation seemed not only incredible but ridiculous. A dozen other things might account for the man across the street; it was because he himself felt guilty that he was so sure the espionage was for him.

Odd, how even to be suspected of wrongdoing undermined a man's morale!

SOMETIME during that long period of waiting he had a new thought: If they were really after him, they might be watching the rear of the house too. He made his way quietly into Margaret's empty room across and stared out, but he could see nothing. Only the forlorn dog had crept out of his shelter and was growling and sniffing at the gate.

He considered it extremely probable that the gate, like the front of the house, was being watched.

"Taking no chances!" he reflected, and went back to his room.

Of course there was this chance: They had certainly found the bond, but had they found the suitcase? If not, things were not so bad. Mrs. Bayne might claim her husband had given the bond to her years ago, and that she had been holding it for an emergency. Whether they believed her or not did not matter, once the suitcase was turned over.

But he had to know. . . .

At eight o'clock he heard Holly going down the stairs and followed her. He needed only one look at her face to know that the worst had happened. She was in the hall, and without speaking she pointed to the drawing-room. He went in, and she came a moment later.

"The police found it," she told him. "Somebody must have followed you."

"What have they done?"

"They've arrested Mr. Cox."

She told him all, omitting nothing except her own resolution to say she had sold the bond: of the arrest, and Margaret's visit, and of Mr. Steinfeldt and the bond; and when she had finished—

"You poor child!" he said. "I'd have done anything in the world for you, and I've let you in for this."

"Never again?" she murmured, and he understood the question.

"Never again," Alan said with deep intensity. And he added: "Oh, I hope I'll never even hear her name again!"

Not in his whole life had he spoken with more profound sincerity. The hope was so deeply implanted as to seem a part of his very being and at the moment he believed its fulfillment possible.

The recollection of that fatuous belief came back to Alan before the end of the following year when, in his grandfather's hall, he stood watching Sophie's father and heard him insistently demanding: "Where is my daughter? I tell you, where is my daughter?"

(The ensuing chapters in this fascinating novel are of exceptional interest. Be sure to read them when they appear in the next, the July, issue.)

"You've only done what I asked you to do."

"I've been stupid—criminally, damnably stupid. That's all."

"It is we who have been both stupid and—criminal," she said painfully. "It has nothing to do with you. You'd better not try to save us. You'd better just go away and leave us. We're sinking anyhow."

"You know I can't do that," he said. "You know, if you know anything in the world, that what concerns you concerns me. Always. I'm not undercutting Brooks, or anything of that sort. I know you are—not for me, or I for you. I'm not making love to you, Holly. I just want you to know how things are with me. Then you won't talk about my getting out."

"You know I have to marry Furrus, don't you?" she said, in a hushed voice.

"I know that. At least—I'm accepting it. I'm only offering you an anchor to windward."

He held out his hand, and she took it. Then she did something that fairly shook his resolution; she put the hand to her cheek and held it there a moment. "You are the best man I ever knew," she said wistfully, and dropped it.

She had told him what she knew—little more than he had already surmised. Not for a moment did she see him actually involved in the business. James Cox was arrested, and Mr. Steinfeldt had gone on his bond; she had herself gone down to see the District Attorney, Mr. Phelps, but he had been in court and had not returned to the office afterward.

She had gone back home with Margaret and James, and things there were heart-breaking. James just sat in a chair and would not speak.

"I'll soon fix that," Warrington told her. "Cox isn't in this thing at all. I'll go down and see him tonight, and tell him so."

He wanted desperately to take her in his arms before, obedient to his order, she started up to bed. He may have been wrong, too, but he thought she might not have minded. She looked as though she needed the protecting clasp of warm and loving arms, comfort and reassurance, and a sanctuary into which to creep, just for a moment.

But he had himself well in hand by that time. When she turned, at the angle of the staircase, he was looking up, reassuringly smiling.

The smile died as she passed out of sight. He was committed to go to the Cox flat that night, and he had no idea how he was to do it. He had not told her the house was being watched. There were other things he had not told her, too. Asserting Cox's innocence and proving it were very different

things. Not only that; his own testimony would not help matters, seeing that he was clearly under suspicion himself.

Only Mrs. Bayne's free and open confession would help any of them, and he had no idea that she would confess.

Chapter Nineteen

WARRINGTON was not certain that the yard and the gate to it were being watched. He had an idea that Cox had been pretty carefully guarded, and that they hoped to catch himself on his way home, still ignorant of what had occurred.

Anyhow, he had to take that chance. His hat was on the table in the hall; he left his overcoat, as an impediment to what might turn out to be quick action, and went back to the kitchen. With his hand on the outer door, however, he remembered the dog and swore softly.

"Might as well raise an alarm and be done with it," he reflected grimly.

But out that way he would have to go if he went at all, and the dog was quiet for the time. The kitchen was dark, and he opened the door cautiously and slid through it. Almost instantly he felt the creature beside him, wriggling its thin body and rubbing against him. He leaned down and patted its head.

"Quiet, old boy," he whispered. "Down!"

He could feel it snuffing at his heels as he crossed the brick-paved yard. He did not go out by the gate into the alley, but chinning himself to the top of the fence at the side, dropped lightly into the next yard. From there he judged it would be safe to inspect the alley, and if it was clear, to get away by that route. But with his disappearance the dog began to yelp, and then to make small futile leaps at the fence.

"Damnation!" he muttered, and stood listening.

Above the dog's desperate yelps and leaps he heard the other gate into the alley quickly open and somebody run in. And the dog, like a finger pointing, was now wailing and scratching at the boards. As Warrington reached the next fence and vaulted it, he heard the gate slam again, and knew that the chase was on.

The advantage was to the man running along the alleyway. He had only to move from gate to gate, looking in. The alley was well lighted, and the yards offered no hiding-places. They were all alike, small rectangles of brick paving, on which abutted kitchen doors and windows. Warrington, to cover the same ground, had to climb a fence each time.

And he was out of training. After the fourth fence he was breathing hard, and at the fifth he came to an *impasse*. He had reached the corner house, and it was surrounded by a high brick wall, offering no finger-hold whatever.

In another minute the gate would open.

THERE was a door, slightly ajar, at the rear of the house beside him, and he did the only thing he could think of—ran up the steps, through the door, and closed it behind him. The kitchen was empty, but some one was moving in the pantry. He had only settled his tie and taken off his hat when an elderly cook entered. He smiled at her.

"Sorry," he said. "I knocked, but nobody answered. My dog got away a few minutes ago, and I thought he came into your yard."

"Haven't seen him," said the woman, eying him.

"He's strange in this neighborhood," he told her, listening intently. "I just got him today."

"Well, what do you want me to do about



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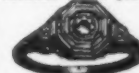


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it?" she demanded. "I'm too busy to stop and cry."

To signify her lack of interest she went to the stove, and with her back turned Warrington managed to turn the key in the door behind him. He was just in time; heavy footsteps ran across the yard, and the next instant they began to climb the steps.

He looked about him. The house in ground plan was not unlike the Baynes'. In that case the door there should lead to the hall. He measured the distance with his eye, and as a peremptory knock came to the kitchen door, and the woman grumbling turned to answer, he opened it and slipped through.

He was in a closet.

Of the detective's questions and the woman's excited answers he heard little or nothing. The shock, plus the beating of his heart in his ears, almost deafened him, and the unreality of his situation dazed him. If he had committed a murder, he could not have shown guilt more clearly than by this whole absurd performance.

And all that in the drawing of a breath or two.

"He was right here when you knocked," the woman was saying. "I didn't even hear him go. He locked that door, too."

"He's run through the house. Which door?" The officer's hand was actually on the knob of the closet, but the cook had opened another door and was peering through it.

"If he did, he's gone for sure."

SHE followed the officer as he ran forward and Warrington, listening with strained ears, heard them in the front of the house. Very quietly he made his exit into the yard again and out the rear gate.

He doubled on his tracks, going back past the Bayne house and so out into a cross-street farther down. Not until he had put a half-dozen blocks between himself and the search did he stop and take his bearings.

He had torn one trouser-knee open, and skinned both of his hands badly. In addition his collar and shirt were disreputable beyond words, and somewhere he had lost his hat. Afterward he was to look back on that flight of his as a sort of nightmare, as useless as a bad dream and much more disastrous. Better, far better, to have walked out the front door and given himself up.

Hatless, then, dirty and torn, he made his way toward the Cox apartment, taking back streets and avoiding policemen whenever he could. One can see him, I think, crossing lighted areas with a bit of a swag, the wind blowing his hair about, and whistling valiantly for the benefit of possible observers; giving the impression that he had just wandered out from some nearby house to drop a letter in the box, or to buy a postage stamp at the corner drug-store. And every now and then pausing, hands in pockets, to take a casual glance to the rear.

And in such fashion did he reach the Aurelia Apartments and to a grin from the elevator boy, proceed to the third floor.

"Look as though you'd been having trouble," said that youth, eying him.

"Motorcycle turned over," said Warrington shamelessly. He considered that rather good; he had not said that his motorcycle had turned over. He smoothed his hair with his hands.

In spite of his morbid reflections earlier in the evening, he still could not regard either James Cox or himself as seriously involved. A straightforward story from him, and it must somehow clear up. The whole thing was absurd. It was monstrous. The bank ought to be darned glad to get the securities back, and no questions asked.

With this in his mind, and the memory

of Holly's face as she had looked down from the angle of the staircase, he rang the bell of the Cox apartment.

MARGARET opened the door. Even before she did so he was conscious of a deathlike stillness beyond it, and with his first sight of her face, he knew that tragedy, sheer stark tragedy, had entered the little flat.

"Oh, it's you," she said tonelessly. "Come in."

James was sitting in a chair. Just sitting, with no newspaper about him, no cigar in his hand to waft its heavy masculine odor into the bedroom. He was sitting there, as he had sat almost ever since their return, staring straight ahead and not moving. . . .

"Don't you want any dinner, James?"

"No, thanks."

"I have broiled steak. You like that, James."

"I'm not hungry."

Finally Margaret had fixed him a tray and put it on the folding card-table, extended before him; he had roused at that and had picked up the coffee cup. Then he groaned and put it down again.

"Sorry," he said thickly. "Maybe later on—"

She knew he was afraid she would see that his hand was trembling.

She could not sew; she could not do anything. Once she had picked up her workbasket, and he had seen the bit of Holly's wedding-dress she was working on. It was the only thing that had roused him.

"Put that down," he said. "You're through with them, my girl. Good and through."

And she had silently put it away, out of sight. . . .

Into this situation, then, Warrington stepped as he entered the door. He had not seen Cox since the night he had struck the policeman, but the crushed figure in the chair bore little resemblance to the truculent individual of that evening.

"James," Margaret said, "you remember Mr. Warrington, don't you? You know he was—"

But her voice trailed off. At the name a change came over James' face. His neck seemed to swell, his voice to flatten and thicken.

"So it's you!" he said, slowly getting up. "You, you damned—"

"James!"

"Get out of that door, or I'll kill you," said James, still in the strange voice. "I mean it. Off with you! Get out of the way, Margaret."

HE stood, his hands clenched and head lowered, impressive, dangerous.

"You dirty swine," he said, "stealing into an honest man's home and hiding your filthy stuff here!"

"I'm sorry, Mr. Cox. That wasn't the intention."

"Oh, it wasn't, eh? Then what in hell was the intention? Do you know what they've done to me? They've arrested me. I'm out on bond. If it hadn't been for Steinfeldt, I'd be in jail tonight. Me, James Cox! Honest James, they call me at the store, and now I'm through. *Through!*" He sank back into his chair again, his fists still clenched, and a vein in his forehead swollen and throbbing.

Warrington glanced at Margaret. All the life had gone out of her masklike face.

"They searched the flat after you left this morning," she said, still in her toneless voice. "Then they went to the store and arrested him. For receiving stolen goods, Mr. Steinfeldt went on his bond."

Suddenly James began to laugh. It was hideous laughter, the chuckle of the martyr dying from the foot-tickling torture.

"We've got to hand it to them," he said, between bursts of the horrible mirth. "They've used us all for their own dirty ends. You too! You and Margaret and me. Smart, they are. I take my hat off to them. And I used to see that hellhound of a woman marching through the store like a duchess! Used to admire her, too. May she—"

Margaret put her hand over his mouth, and he subsided like a child.

"I won't have that sort of talk, James," she said. "Mr. Warrington is going to tell us about it, and we'll all see what we can do."

Warrington looked at her. Over James' head she was gazing at him with peculiar intentness.

"There isn't much to tell," she said. "Of course the charge won't stand. We'll fix that up tomorrow. If anyone's guilty, I'm the one. You see, the stuff was in the suitcase, hidden under some boards in the attic. When it was found—"

"Who found it?" asked James.

The question was to Warrington, but it was Margaret who replied.

"I've told you, James. It was Holly."

"And I don't believe it. It was that sister of yours. I'll bet she's known it was there all the time, too."

"I only know what Holly says."

BUT she was lying, deliberately and with a purpose. Warrington read the appeal in her eyes. Holly had told her the truth, but James was not to know it. To tell him that Mrs. Bayne had found the suitcase and sold a bond from it was to put a weapon in his hands against her, and one that, in his soreness and bitter humiliation, he was sure to use. She had dragged him, honest James Cox, and his pride in the mud. Not only now: from the beginning of his courtship, when she had denied him the privilege of seeing Margaret in her house, to this crowning humiliation he owed her a thousand slights, a thousand miseries. Small wonder Margaret was lying to him.

But James was still suspicious.

"Let him tell it," he said briefly, and sitting back, watched the two of them, his wife and Warrington, with hard, suspicious eyes.

"Well," Warrington temporized, "there isn't much to tell. I suppose they're going on the theory that we've conspired to get the stuff out of the house, probably so that Mr. Bayne could get it later on; but what actually happened is that Holly wanted to avoid just that. She found it under some boards in the attic, and I brought it here. The idea was to make an arrangement at the bank for its restitution, but when I went to the bank this morning, there was nobody there, no responsible officers, and—I couldn't very well hand it to the receiving teller!"

"And so you left it here, to ruin me. To ruin both of us."

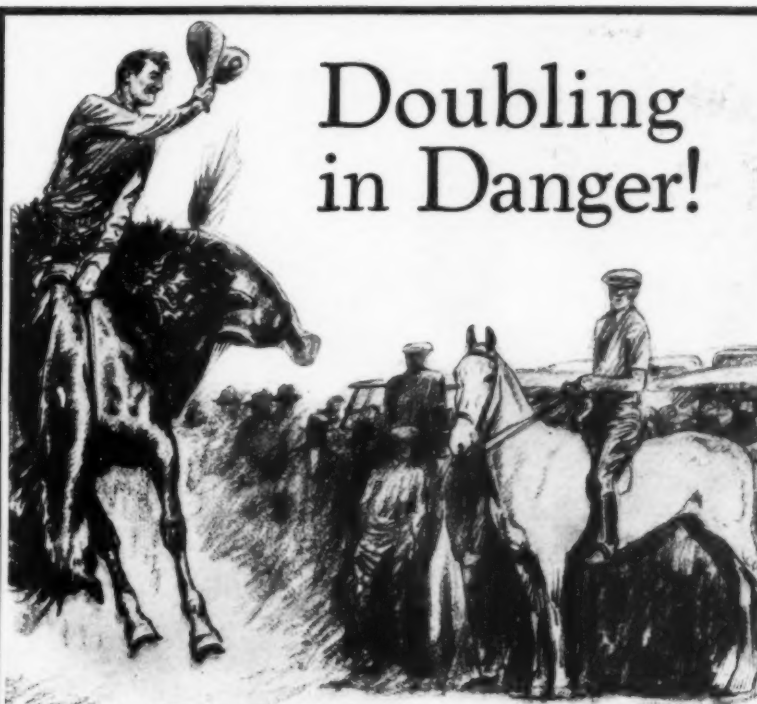
"I'm going to the District Attorney's house, from here."

But James only shook his head.

"What's the use?" he said. "Don't you suppose the Bayne house was searched from top to bottom after Tom Bayne was arrested? I'm not saying you knew, but somebody knew where those securities were, and has known all along. And don't tell me it was the girl. She couldn't have been more than ten when it happened."

"If you mean my sister—" Margaret flared. But James took no notice of her.

"V'ee what I mean," he went on. "And there's no use going to the District Attorney. I gathered today he's been fighting this pardon, and he's pretty sore. But I'm not through fighting; I haven't begun yet. If they think I'm going to sit down under this they can think again."



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Chapter Twenty



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IT was ten o'clock when Warrington left them. He had a grateful glance and a word or two from Margaret as she let him out, but he was no farther along than when he had arrived. Left alone, free to tell all the truth, he would have been less confused, but he had the naturally honest man's helplessness at having to connive at a lie.

He went down and out into the street. There was a roundsman standing on the pavement, and to save his life he could not avoid a self-conscious movement away from him.

"I'm afraid!" he muttered. "Afraid of a policeman!"

Margaret had roughly drawn the knee of his torn trousers together, and he had borrowed James' cap. Strange to think that even so small an incident as that, of borrowing a cap, was to have its influence on his situation. How long ago it seemed since Margaret, on the pavement at Kelsey Street with a shawl over her head, had said:

"Sometimes he wears a cap. It is less trouble when we go to the movies."

He plodded along the street.

Phelps, the District Attorney, lived out of town. Warrington took a street-car, but it was eleven o'clock when he reached the house, and that hard-working gentleman had already retired. Persistent ringing of the door-bell finally brought a sulky maid in a kimono, who told him the family was in bed and not to be disturbed.

"Tell Mr. Phelps I've killed a man and want to surrender myself," he said with a touch of his old humor.

"There's a police station next to the car-barn," she told him, and closed the door in his face.

"Well," he reflected as he trudged down the drive, "like the Irishman on Friday, the Lord knows I've asked for fish."

AT the all-night stand near the car-barn he bought a newspaper and looked it over, but there was nothing but a brief notice that Thomas Bayne, imprisoned for embezzling funds from the Harrison Bank, was ill in the penitentiary hospital and although pardoned was not yet able to leave.

"Keeping it under their hats," he considered.

He still felt that a straightforward story ought to clear everything up, at least so far as he himself was concerned. For one thing the door-man at the bank might remember him. That would prove his good faith. But on the other hand, how was he to show that he had not sold the bond for his own benefit, since both Holly and Margaret Cox were determined to keep Mrs. Bayne out of it? But he knew what would happen if that question came up. Holly would claim that she herself had given it to him to sell.

He fairly ground his teeth with fury at the thought. Better to see the District Attorney early in the morning, before they bound him to any more evasions, and clear the thing up. Tell it all; that was the way. He had heard that Phelps was a decent sort. He would understand.

But he was going to play his own hand. He had no intention of being arrested; that weakened a man's case before he had a chance at it.

He would surrender himself in the morning, and they would let him out later on his own recognizance, probably. But the immediate problem of the night presented itself. He could not go back to Kelsey Street.

In the end he found a small and shabby sanctuary in a third-rate hotel downtown, and after locking the door took stock of himself in the mirror.

"Gad!" he said. "It's just as well I didn't

see Phelps! He'd have run me in on general principles."

Later on he rang the bell. "Anybody around here to mend and press a suit of clothes?" he asked the boy who came.

"Nope. Send them out for you in the morning."

"How long will it take?"

"How big's a lump of coal?" said the boy, grinning. "Get them back early in the morning, maybe. Maybe not."

By offer of a bribe, however, he got a promise of prompt action, and in his undergarments began a long and fruitless pacing of the room. Long after midnight he was still moving about, a ridiculous and highly anxious figure. The more he thought about the matter, the more certain he became that Holly would sacrifice herself to save her mother. And from something Margaret had told him outside the flat as he left, he knew that this sacrifice was not the absurdity it seemed on the surface.

"We must keep my sister out of this," she had said. "She has a bad heart. It might kill her."

HE made, finally, a rather infuriated resolve: darn it all, if somebody had to be the goat, he would be. They weren't going to stand Holly up and question her. But all his tenderness was for Holly; for Mrs. Bayne he had only anger and increasing resentment. To save that soft-handed, gently unscrupulous aristocrat, he might have to drag an unknown but honorable name in the dirt. And why? Because her heart was weak, or she thought it was! Well, why not let her take her shock? Other people had to. Suppose poor Cox's heart had been weak? Or Holly's?

A wave of resentment and anger fairly shook him. He saw Mrs. Bayne at the door, watching spiderlike for Holly, lest the fly in the drawing-room escape. Again, he himself was looking down the stair-well, and she was below, listening furtively and hindering his own progress down the stairs.

He counted his scores against her: Margaret lying unconscious on the kitchen floor; the night she had brought him the bond to sell, and the play she had made on his sympathy; Holly in the attic, staring with tragic eyes at something in the candle-light; the Cox apartment, and James, broken and yet savage in his chair.

And he tried to hate her; and then he thought of her weak relaxed throat and her childish blue eyes as she gave him the bond, and he somehow could not. After all, she had probably known about the suitcase for a long time, and yet she had suffered and pinched, denying herself everything that

"The Love Altar"

Could a story possess a more romantic title? And could a story thus titled be better written than by Rita Weiman, all of whose stories for this magazine have been the outstanding features of the issues containing them? This new tale is planned for an early number. It is the astonishing story of what befell an American woman who crossed an ocean and a continent to meet and wed the man whom she had loved for fourteen years. She sought romance—and found it, but not in the way that she had thought she would.

would have made life worth while to her. And when she had finally succumbed, it had not been for herself. He doubted if one penny of the money had been spent on herself.

Sometime toward morning he got heavily into bed in his undergarments, and dropped asleep almost at once.

At eight o'clock he wakened and rang for his clothes, but the boy who had taken them out had gone off duty and was not in the hotel, and nobody else knew anything about them. At nine o'clock he began a frenzied effort to locate them, tramping his floor in a state of mental agony and cursing himself for having let them go. Grinning bellboys came and went, and housemaids smiled outside in the passage, but the absurdity of his situation was obliterated by his anxiety. He was as nearly insane as a healthy, able-bodied man of twenty-eight may be and yet retain fragments of reason.

And at ten o'clock he did the last thing he should have done under the circumstances. He telephoned to Baylie, at the office, to go up to Kelsey Street and get him a suit of clothes.

Chapter Twenty-one

THERE is a certain interest in comparisons, and sometimes not a little humor. Take for example, that morning, with Warrington half-crazed in a shabby and not too clean room at the Hotel Stockton, and then consider Mr. Furness Brooks, emerging from his shower to find the buttons in his shirt and his clothing pressed and ready to his hand. No frenzied search for his garments; a calm shave, and an equally calm and fastidious dressing; the studio room freshly in order, the ash-trays emptied, the fire going, and before it a small table with coffee bubbling in an electric arrangement, and Miguel at hand with bacon and eggs and the morning paper.

Rather a painful comparison, too, when one thinks about it, with neat stacks of wedding invitations: "Mrs. Thomas Bayne requests the honor of your presence at the marriage of her daughter, Anne Hollister, to Mr. Furness Schuyler Brooks—" and so forth. The names and addresses on them had been carefully selected from the Social Register. And not only the environments but the states of mind of the two men concerned present ample ground for contrast. Humorous, too, with Warrington's head outside his door, watching the passageway with haggard eyes, and Brooks calmly surveying his domain and fitting a new mistress into it.

"Soon have to lay two places, Miguel," he said cheerfully to the servant.

"Yes sir," said Miguel, and smiled at some private Oriental joke of his own.

Brooks sat down, but before he did so he got a notebook and made one or two additions to his list of names—careful additions: new people, but coming on and willing to pay their ways as they came.

The entire responsibility of the list was his. Asked about her own, Holly had only raised her eyebrows.

"But I don't know anybody," she said. "Of course Mother's people—but I haven't seen any of them for years."

And Mrs. Bayne's list had been of little use to him. Times had changed, even in ten years, and people who used to be important had died or ceased to count. New families had come up, not all of them bearing the closest inspection, but smart and accepted. He ignored her fretful protest that she had never heard of them, and put them all in.

So it happened that he did not glance at the morning paper for some time. Then, true to his type, he read the headlines and

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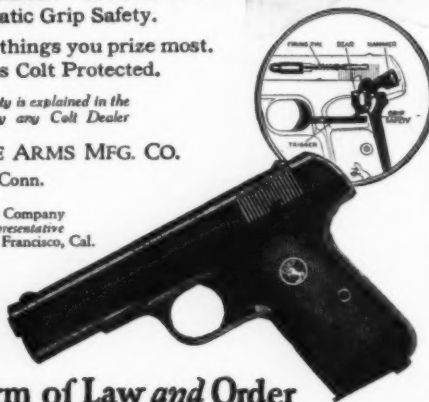
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turned to the society news, and thus it was not until later that he saw, halfway down the first page, a headline which caught his eye, and having done so, held it.

**"BANK LOOT FOUND
"Securities from Harrison Bank
Recovered"**

was what he read.

The article itself was not long. Given only the initial fact, of the recovery of a suitcase containing certain missing negotiable bonds from the Harrison Bank, and the additional news that they had been found in the apartment of one James Cox, brother-in-law of Bayne, it went on to deal with Bayne's record and his recent pardon. Evidently only the barest statement had been given out by the District Attorney's office.

He read it again. With the first reading he had felt only anger and furious annoyance. By the Lord Harry, wouldn't the damned story ever die? And to have it come up again just now—was there ever such rotten luck? Already he knew that the breakfast-tables and boudoirs of his world were buzzing with it, and that by afternoon the society editors would have handed in their bit, and his approaching marriage to Tom Bayne's daughter would be duly noted in the published accounts.

It was only with the second reading that the true inwardness of the situation occurred to him. He threw down the paper and leaped to his feet, overturning his chair.

"Cox!" he thought. "Cox! That's the counter-jumper. The new uncle. He couldn't have known Bayne. Then how the devil did he get the stuff?"

THERE was only one conclusion:

They had had the securities all this time, had them and hidden them. They were as criminal as Bayne himself; Cox had been no more than a cat's-paw in their lady-like unscrupulous hands. It was Margaret and Mrs. Bayne who were guilty.

He remembered Margaret. He could see her now, casually opening the front door.

"Oh, did you ring? I thought I heard the bell," and with a sort of timid archness, taking him into the drawing-room.

"I'm afraid it's cold in here. The furnace man is too careless about coal."

He knew by this time that there was no furnace man, and that the drawing-room was always cold. He knew there was no Hilda. All their small hypocrisies and snobberies had long before been uncovered before his discerning prominent blue eyes.

But why the poverty, if they had had this hoard to draw upon? He considered that shrewdly, in view of his knowledge of them.

"Afraid," he concluded. "Holding on until the old boy got out and told them how to dispose of it."

To be fair to him, he did not include Holly in all this. Selfish as were his pre-occupations, his mind finally drifted to her with a new and unexpected compassion. "The poor kid!" he thought, and saw her perhaps getting her first knowledge through the morning paper. And with that wave of sympathy he felt stronger, every inch a man. If he dramatized himself a bit, it was one fine gesture, to be laid to his credit.

"I'll stand by her," he thought, and drew himself up a trifle. "I'm all she has, and I'm not letting go. The poor kid!"

He had no illusions; he knew what standing by would mean. The men would approve him for it, but the women would not. And his world was largely women. It was women who made out lists, paid calls, gave parties. It was at tea-tables he was popular, not in smoking-rooms after dinners. With much the same gesture he had disposed of the invitations, he brushed this world of women out of his way.

At the most his business was a casual one. He ordered his car brought around from the public garage where he kept it, and still warm and exalted with sacrifice, drove to the house on Kelsey Street.

Chapter Twenty-two

HAVING retired early, Mrs. Bayne was up before seven o'clock that morning. She got out of bed in her cold room, lowered the window and then put a match to the fire Holly had laid ready the night before. In front of this she placed a pitcher of water to warm, and having done so, crawled back into bed again.

She felt cheerful and active. The day opened before her, full of interesting things to be done. She took her purse from under her pillow and carefully counted her money. She still had almost nine hundred dollars.

She pulled the blankets up around her and fell to work on a shopping-list, but first carefully she put down a few items, considering them at length. Twenty-five dollars for the organist at St. Andrews, ten dollars for the sexton, and a hundred dollars for the florist, for rented palms and a few white chrysanthemums. That was a hundred and thirty-five; from eight hundred and ninety, it left seven hundred and fifty-five dollars.

She thought she could manage. . . .

She dropped her list and fell into deep thought. Somebody would have to give Holly away; she couldn't go up the aisle alone. But the Parkers had gone to Europe, and anyhow, she had an idea that Sam Parker wouldn't have been keen about doing it. Sam had lost a good bit in the bank trouble; he had been a director then.

For the first time she considered Margaret's husband. He wasn't impressive, but at least he was available. And whether one liked it or not, he was a part of the family. One couldn't ask an outsider to do that sort of thing, and although in this new state of society widowed mothers occasionally gave their daughters away, she did not approve of it. Nor, as she reflected bitterly, was she widowed.

She heard the paper boy on the steps below, and putting on her slippers, went down through the cold hall and retrieved the morning paper from the vestibule. On her way back, she awakened Holly and then crawled into her bed once more, shivering. She did not, however, look at the news pages at all. Paper and pencil in hand, she went over the advertisements, marking bargains here and there, and special sales.

She was contented, quite happy.

Later on she took her bath from the warm water out of the pitcher, and dressed carefully to go out. When hatted and coated she reached the chilly dining-room, the odor of coffee and bacon welcomed her.

A little worried frown appeared on Mrs. Bayne's face as she surveyed Holly when she brought in the food.

"I hated waking you," she said, "but we have such a lot to do today. You don't look as if you have had any sleep."

"I slept all right, Mother."

"I wish you'd put on some weight," said her mother, discontentedly. "Really, for a bride to look as wretched as you do is no compliment to her husband."

AT this, however, she caught Holly's eyes fixed on her so oddly that she sheered off from the subject abruptly.

"I wish you'd come downtown with me this morning."

"I've promised Aunt Margaret to go there."

"For a fitting? I shouldn't think, with clothes as straight as they are now, you'd need much fitting." But her mind, preter-



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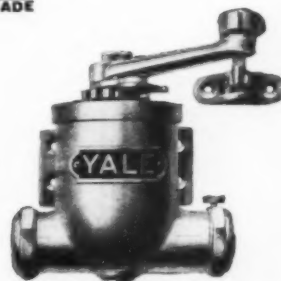
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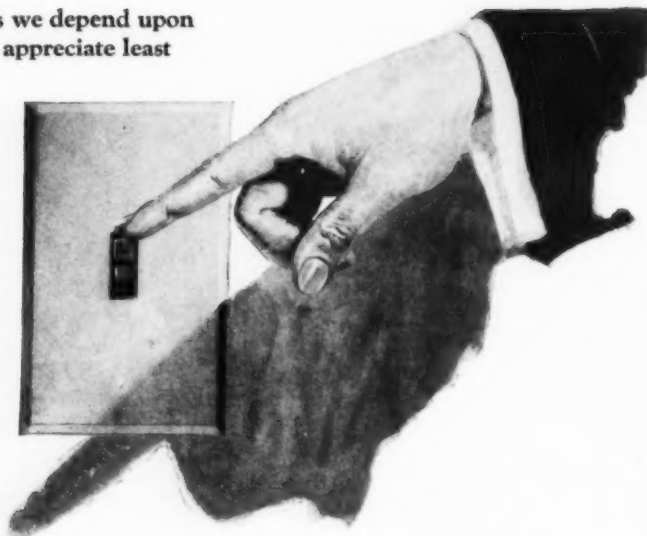


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naturally active these days, veered to another matter instantly, and she put down her coffee-cup. "I do wish you'd wear rubber gloves, Holly," she said. "Your hands—"

"I can't work in them. I've tried."

"Then you can't work," said Mrs. Bayne. "We'll have to have Mrs. Carter in sooner or later. We'd better get her now."

"At three dollars a day? And food?"

"Only for the next month or so. People will be calling and presents coming, and all that. We simply can't manage by ourselves."

SHE went on, cheerfully planning. Holly felt that ten minutes more of this cheerful babbling, and she would rise up from her chair and scream. What did it matter whether they had Mrs. Carter in or not? What did it matter that her hands were red, and her mother recommending glycerine and rose-water at night to whiten them? What did anything matter, but James Cox and the trouble they had brought to him?

Only one ray of comfort she had. She had missed the paper from the vestibule and knew her mother had taken it. But she had evidently not seen the news item.

Her mother was going. She got up and drew on her shabby gloves, gloves without which no gentlewoman ever passed her front door, examined her purse for the lists, and so went out.

Holly accompanied her to the door and kissed her good-by, much as she would have kissed an irresponsible child. During the long watches of the night, when a strange dog howled from somewhere apparently close under her windows and she had listened vainly for that creak on the stair which would signify Warrington's return from James Cox's, she had made one determination: whatever came, her mother was to have this one day more.

It was not that she so loved her mother. There were times when she guiltily wondered if she loved her at all. But passionately she believed that life had been cruel to her, and that she had suffered long and unfairly. Although she did not put it so to herself, much of her service was a sort of vicarious atonement. Once, indeed, she had told her feeling about this to Margaret, but it was after she had been forbidden to see James, and Margaret had been bitter.

"Nonsense!" she had said sharply. "She's had it easy all her life. She's got it easy now."

Holly was not thinking beyond the day.

She closed the front door and then went up to her mother's room. There she burned the newspaper and turned down the bed to air. By the small traveling clock, it was time for Warrington to be up and moving about, but she could hear nothing. She was quite certain he was in, however; there had been a strange dog closed in the yard when she went down that morning, and a half-used bottle of milk on the kitchen table. That would have been his work, she knew. She had brought the dog in and given him a warm place by the stove.

But when she finally went up to the third floor and knocked at Warrington's door, there was no reply, nor did any cheery splashing come from the bathroom. She opened the door and looked in.

She was frightened. His bed had not been used. She stood in the doorway, staring around. Could he have stayed at Aunt Margaret's? Maybe something had happened to James. Maybe he had felt he could not stand it and had tried—

She had, like Warrington, a swift vision of Aunt Margaret, and the way she had tried to escape when there had seemed to be no other way. She covered her eyes to shut it out.

The other possible significance of his absence did not occur to her then. She drove

away the thought of James and went in. Since Margaret had gone, Mrs. Bayne had taken charge of the room, and it gave Holly an odd little thrill to be there, to sniff the faint odor of tobacco-smoke which clung about the place, to see his clothing hanging in the closet, his slippers by the bed.

On the bureau were laid out his military brushes and a collar box. Those, and a few books, were all the mark he had put on the room. Five minutes, or ten, and he could be gone—as if he had never been there!

She moved to the bureau and stood fingering his brushes. She could remember her mother's bureau in her father's time. When he went away, his brushes went also, and for a long time there had been an empty space left where they had used to lie.

Suddenly she sat down in the chair by the empty hearth and began to cry, slow, rather dreadful tears; she cried for her father, for James and Margaret, for her mother, and even for herself, as she saw ahead of her long joyless years, if not worse. She and her mother, and perhaps her father too, shut up in that dreary house, with little love and no happiness. Time going on, and she herself drying up and getting sour, like Aunt Margaret. A succession of roomers, too; and maybe she would be arch with them, like Aunt Margaret.

But mostly her grief was for Warrington, that he cared for her and nothing could ever come of it, and that she had involved him in a trouble which was not his. To the one she was resigned; to the other, never.

She forgot the empty house and its morning disorder, forgot that she wore only her working clothes, forgot Aunt Margaret, James, Mr. Steinfeldt, all that motley gathering which had cluttered up her mind—flung them away, rather. She threw on hat and coat, picked up her purse and reached the front door just as Furness Brooks rang the bell.

FURNESS, filled with high resolve and magnanimity, stepped inside the door and held out his arms.

"You poor kid!" he said. "Did you think I was going to let you down?"

She had not thought of him at all; certainly she was not thinking of him then. She stared at him blankly.

"Please don't keep me," she told him. "I'm busy now. I have to go out."

"But listen!" he said, blocking the door. "What's the matter with you? Here I am to tell you that everything's all right. With me, anyhow. And you try to run off!"

"Get out of the way, Furness. I'll see you some other time. I tell you I'm in a hurry."

"Hurry, hell!" he stormed, suddenly angry. "If you think for a minute—"

"Oh, go away," she told him wearily. "I'm not thinking at all. Not about you, anyhow."

She dodged around him and out through the front door, leaving him speechless and stunned in the hallway. He recovered enough, however, to go out onto the steps and to call to her.

"Holly! Come back! Just for a minute."

But she either did not hear him or paid no attention.

Angry and humiliated, his fine gesture repudiated, he went back into the house. He wanted somebody to talk to, some explanation; he even wandered as far back as the kitchen, but there was no one about—nothing but a starveling dog which snarled at him from beneath the kitchen range.

Chapter Twenty-three

PHELPS, the District Attorney, leaned back in his chair. He was moderately young and not unkindly. True, it was his

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business to administer justice rather than mercy, and this had hardened him a trifle, as strict justice often does. A just man is often a hard man.

But now he was puzzled. The night before, he had been very sure of himself. Bayne, on his emergence from prison, was to collect the stolen securities, realize what he could on them, and decamp. He never had believed Tom Bayne was a sick man. And there had been too much of that sort of thing; men went crooked, hid the profits, took a sentence and came out again to enjoy them.

"You can figure it this way," he had told his assistant the day before. "Bayne laid away six hundred thousand dollars. What he's really been doing is to stay ten years in the pen, doing easy clerical work at sixty thousand a year."

"He wouldn't get as much as that, the way he'd have to dispose of them."

"Perhaps not. But he'd get a tidy sum."

Now, however, he was not so sure. First had come the word from the penitentiary that Bayne was really ill, possibly a dying man, and this from sources he trusted. And now here was this girl, tragically meek, telling him he had been wrong; there had been no conspiracy. It was far simpler than that. She had found the suitcase and had needed money, so she had sold a bond.

He leaned back and put his hands in his pockets.

"You needed money?" he said. "Why? I mean, you imply a special reason."

"I was going to be married, and we've had very little. I had to have—clothes."

"It had nothing to do with your father's return home from—with his return home?"

"It was taken before we knew that."

He surveyed her. "This Cox, now. You say he didn't know the securities were in your possession?"

"How could he know? I had only just found them. And he has never been in the house in his life."

HE leaned forward alertly. "What do you mean by that?" he asked. "He's your aunt's husband. Do you mean there has been trouble?"

"Not trouble, no. My mother didn't approve of him. That is, she felt—"

"Oh!" He considered that rather grimly. He knew Mrs. Bayne. Not well, but once long ago she had snubbed his wife, and he had never forgotten it. The picture of James Cox, sitting huddled in his chair the day before, arose in his mind. Poor devil! So that was the way of it. He wasn't good enough for the family, but he was good enough for them to use.

"Well, now let's get this straight: You gave this roomer, this fellow Warrington, the bond to sell? And he did this, and gave you the money?"

"Yes."

"But you say he didn't know how you'd got the bond?"

"No."

"Have you seen Warrington since he carried the suitcase for you to the Cox flat?"

"For a few minutes last night."

"Where?" he asked sharply.

"At the house."

"He was there last night?" he said, sitting up in his chair. "How the—how did he get in?"

"I don't know," she told him honestly. "I was out, probably, when he came back. He came downstairs later on, and I told him what had happened; then he went out again, to my aunt's, to see what he could do."

PHELPS tapped the desk irritably with his fingers; they had had him last night, then, in that house on Kelsey Street, and he had given them the slip! He'd see about that; he'd—

"So he went out and didn't come back?" he asked, controlling his voice.

"No. I thought he had stayed at my aunt's apartment, but he didn't. I've been there this morning."

So she had been anxious. There was more to this, certainly, than met the eye.

"A little while ago you spoke of your marriage," he said. "Are you engaged to this Warrington?"

"No," she said, and colored. "He is only—a roomer in the house."

"How well did Warrington know your uncle, Mr. Cox?"

"Not at all. I don't think he had ever even seen him."

"You are sure of that, are you?"

"Quite sure."

"Suppose I tell you that they were acquainted, as long ago as October? That at that time a small incident happened which concerned Mr. Cox, and that Warrington was with him at the time?"

"I would think there must be a mistake. But I don't see how it would matter, really."

"Now, let's go back a little. You found this suitcase, and after you had taken one bond, you were sorry, eh? You wanted it out of the house so you wouldn't be tempted again? Is that it?"

"I wanted it back where it belonged. In the bank."

"And until Warrington surprised you in the attic, he had not known it was there?"

"How could he? It was under the floor."

"How long is it since any member of the family has seen your father?"

"My mother was there about four weeks ago."

"Ah! Now, suppose we just go into this from a different angle, for a minute. Suppose, just to see how it works, we say this: Your mother learned at the prison that the suitcase was in the house. Being an honorable person, she did not touch it, but she told her sister. Do you see what I mean? Now, then, your aunt is newly married and she has no secrets from her husband, so she passes the news to Cox. And Cox knows Warrington. Whatever you may think, we can prove that."

"But it isn't true. I've told you the truth."

"Then where is this Warrington?" he demanded sternly. "What is he hiding from? Why did he leave the stuff at the Cox house instead of taking it to the bank? My dear Miss Bayne," he said, leaning forward, "I don't believe you took that bond. I believe you are protecting—well, we will say somebody else. And it's no good. Go home and think it over; you have no business being mixed up in this."

He rang the bell and there was a movement among those waiting in the anteroom. She got up, feeling dizzy and slightly dazed.

"My mother," she said. "I don't want my mother to know about this. She has heart trouble, and it would kill her."

"I see. We'll be as easy as we can."

But he was not easy a half-hour or so later, with two detectives lined up unhappily before him.

"I don't want any more excuses," he said angrily. "I want this fellow Warrington, and no more slips. What the devil do you fellows think you're doing with him? Playing peek-a-boo?"

Chapter Twenty-four

FOR some reason Baylie, at the office, had chosen to regard Warrington's desperate message as highly humorous. He roared with laughter over the telephone, and Warrington, as he hung up, felt he had done a reckless thing.

Had he been able to see into the office, he would have been certain of it. Baylie,

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THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

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red-headed and cheerfully sophisticated, wandered over to Miss Sharp's desk and passed on the glad tidings.

"Can you beat it?" he inquired jovially. "What sort of a boss have you got, anyhow, hanging around a disreputable hotel without his clothes?"

"Quit stringing me, Mr. Baylie."

"It's a fact, and I don't mean maybe. He's at the Stockton."

"Never heard of it."

"Well, you'll hear of it again, and he's going to hear of it, if I live to tell the tale. Says he sent his clothes out to be pressed and can't get them back!"

They laughed together, not maliciously.

After Baylie had got his hat and started out, Miss Sharp remembered something and went into the outer office, and the detective standing there surveying the board, turned at her approach.

"Mr. Warrington will be in before long," she told him. "He's just telephoned. He's at the Hotel Stockton just now. But you'd better wait here. He'll be around soon."

There was amusement in her face, and he looked at her shrewdly.

"What's funny, sister? Tell me. I like to laugh."

"Ask Mr. Warrington when he comes in," she said, smiling.

"Tell me now. I can't wait," he coaxed her.

He was her own sort. She had never seen him before, but in her world, acquaintance and familiarity were not far apart. She looked around, saw they were unobserved, and passed the tale on to him. But he did not laugh. All at once his comradeship disappeared, and he pushed her aside with a movement more forcible than polite.

"How long ago did this Baylie start?" he demanded.

"You asked for that. Now you've got it and—"

"How long ago? Five minutes? Ten minutes?"

"He's just gone," she said sulkily, and followed him with resentful eyes as he bolted out the door.

"Well, can you beat that?" she muttered, and sullenly went back to her desk.

TO the detective, the fact that Warrington was trying to get another suit of clothing meant only one thing: a bolt. He was relieved, therefore, to find that his man was still in the hotel, and curiously enough, registered under his own name. He sent a bell-hop up to watch the door and used the telephone on the desk, lowering his voice carefully.

"Got him," he said. "He's sent out for some different clothes, but I've got him, all right. I'll bring him right around."

It was about that time that Warrington's suit, neatly pressed and repaired, was passed through his door, and the detective caught him as he was leaving his room.

He took the arrest very quietly.

"I was on my way anyhow," was all he said.

They went down together in the elevator, and out on the pavement another man took up a position on his other side. He walked between them, a free man to all appearances, a free man in a neatly pressed suit, with James' old cap on his head and his linen exceeding dirty. But he was not a free man; he was on his way to jail.

However, they did not commit him at once. They took him first to the City Hall, and to the District Attorney's office. But before that, he had to wait for some time in the outer room, where one of the detectives chewed tobacco morosely, spitting into a large brass cuspidor, and the other cleaned his nails with his penknife.

At last one of the men took him in. He had no idea of what he was expected to



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"**B**UT somehow or other, I simply must tell you.

"I know this is something that most people might not talk about. Yet I feel it is my duty to tell you."

"Well, what is it?" her friend demanded.

The other was about to whisper something to her. But then she drew back.

"It may seem foolish," she said, "but I just can't bring myself to say it. You must know it yourself!"

* * *

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inquiry might have taken a different form if you'd acted like an honest man. You haven't. You escaped last night and hid yourself at an obscure hotel; this morning you sent for another suit of clothes. You wear a hat usually, don't you? What are you doing with that cap? If we hadn't landed you where would you be now? Making a get-away!"

SUDDENLY Warrington laughed. There was a bit of hysteria in the laughter, but he could not help himself. He got out a not overclean handkerchief and wiped his eyes.

"Making a get-away!" he said. "Oh, my Lord, that's funny! Listen, Mr. District Attorney, if that's who you are—I didn't catch the name when we were introduced. What do you do when you tear your trousers? I tore mine getting away from some friends of yours last night. Tore them on a fence. You can send around and find that out from the tailor who mended them—if you can locate him. I couldn't, all morning."

In spite of himself the District Attorney smiled. The little break had relieved the tension, and his voice was not so hard when he began again.

"Why don't you come clean on this, Warrington?" he said. "The bank people don't want 'o prosecute; they're sitting very pretty. Let's have the whole story and see what can be done about it."

TAKE A FELLOW YOUR SIZE

(Continued from page 57)

was justified. He was back in the hopeless days of childhood when everything he did was wrong—and as he walked slowly back toward the college, he kept looking over his shoulder, half expecting the snow to suddenly bring forth a crowd of jeering pygmies who cried in dreadful voices: "Take a fellow your size, cowardly custard, take a fellow your size!" He slunk to his room by devious ways, avoiding scrutiny, and when he got there sat staring out of the window for a long time. Then he started to pack his bag.

IT was, on the whole, rather fortunate for Martin and his Lila that Brick Kenilworth entered before the bag was all packed. But if Brick was an angel in disguise, one can only say of him that the disguise was practically perfect. He was a stubby little special-student in the graduate-school, as popular as he was useless, who abhorred all femininity and was universally supposed to possess the hardest head for intoxicants since the heroic days of "Souze" Corley, who invented Dynamite Punch.

"H'lo, Daddy-long-legs—how's everything?"

"H'lo, Brick. All right," said Martin, musing bitterly that everything was all wrong.

"Going down to the great big city, huh?" Brick looked at the bag.

"Yeah; going to take a trip," said Martin, reflecting that Brick little knew the sorry destination at the end of that journey.

"Hot dog!" said Brick appreciatively. "Wish I had some cuts left. There's a little place on 47th where you can get gen-u-wine vodka if you ask for Joe—But listen, Legs, that reminds me. Come over to the room a sec. Want to show you something."

"Sorry, Brick, but—"

"Oh, don't be so cautious—this is a real surprise. Just invented it. Got to have somebody to show it off to. Besides—rotten weather like this—going on trip—catch cold. Got to have a shot of something keep you from catching cold. Bad things, colds," said Brick seriously, shaking his head. "Got to stop colds, you know."

"I'll tell you everything I know, except how I got the bond I sold."

"I know all the rest. You know as well as I do that the situation hinges on that. And I'll tell you this: if I can prove that Tom Bayne's family has known that stuff was in the house for the past ten years, I'll go after them. And I'll prove it if I can."

"They didn't know it. I'll swear to that."

"And you won't tell about the bond?"

"No."

"Think a minute. If this case ever gets to a jury, there are two angles to it: either the Bayne family is involved, as I've told you, or you are—you and Cox. You knew Cox, and Cox married Mrs. Bayne's sister. Suppose the sister talks, and Cox tells you what he knows? You go there, take a room, and look about, and finally you locate it. It doesn't look so good, does it?"

"It looks pretty rotten."

"Well, come clean. Get out if you can."

"It will take some thinking over. I don't care about myself, but I—I didn't sleep much last night, and I haven't had any breakfast. I need food, I guess, and a chance to think."

"I imagine we can provide both of those," said the District Attorney cheerfully, and rang a bell.

(In the next instalment this absorbing novel by the distinguished author of "The Amazing Interlude" comes to its powerfully dramatic climax.)

"Oh, well," said Martin. After all, What Did Anything Matter Now?

"But what do you call it?" said Martin, some time later, regarding the straw-colored liquid in his glass.

"Call it?" said Brick, who by now was having a little difficulty with his consonants. "Call it the World's Illusion—snappy name, what? The World's Illusion. Yeah! What do you think of it?"

"I can't say it's too potent—yet," said Martin somberly.

"No?" said Brick, giggling inanely. "No? Well, fella, you just wait. It's lemon-juice and gin and honey and just a little brandy. But the honey makes it keep on distilling after it's down. Jus' d'stilling an' d'stilling. You jus' wait. Have 'nother?"

"Sure," said Martin, "with lots of honey. Want to forget. Things. Want to forget."

MARTIN must have forgotten things quite successfully after that, for he had no idea how it was that he and Brick, sometime later, were suddenly attending the last vaudeville-show of the evening at the local theater. There had been a number of World's Illusions—there must have been dinner—but that gave no real explanation of why they were at present seated stiffly in the front row of a box, clapping violently as the curtain went down on the last notes of a stout soprano in soiled white satin. He nudged Brick.

"How we get here?"

"Ask the doorman," said Brick; whereupon he giggled and promptly fell asleep. Martin felt disgusted with him. Hardest head in college indeed! Why, the fellow couldn't even absorb a few World's Illusions without hibernating, while he, Martin, was perfectly sober. It was true he couldn't remember how he got into the theater, but he was perfectly sober, for all that. He felt a wild impulse to tell the suspicious-looking shoe-clerk on his other side how perfectly sober he was, but restrained himself nobly. Mustn't miss the rest of the performance.

The lights winked—the curtain went up again. A placard said: "The Russian Gi-

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By ELLEN J. BUCKLAND
Graduate Nurse

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ants in Their Famous Musical Medley." Martin, his eyes fixed owlishly on the stage, passed a dizzy hand over his forehead. Then, leaning forward, he stared and stared.

The Russian Giants were not misnamed. There were four of them—dressed in enormous and violent uniforms—and when they sang, it was like a quartet arranged exclusively for bass-drums. But what struck Martin was their height—their unbelievable height.

The smallest of them, he thought feverishly, must top him by a good two inches. And as for the largest—

His eyes traveled from one to the other with gloating satisfaction. He could not take his eyes away.

After the number was over and his hands stung with applauding, he nudged Brick again.

"What the—"

"Get out of here," said Martin firmly.

"Got some business I gotta tend to. You gotta be witness." And, protesting fiercely in whispers, Brick was dragged out into the night.

"What we goin' round to stage-door for? What's the idea?"

"Wait and see," said Martin. The cold air was sobering him rapidly, but his purpose remained firm.

At last the Russians filed out of the entrance in street-clothes, chatting together.

"See those guys, Brick?"

"Are they real?" said Brick in some doubt.

"You bet they are." Martin's voice rose to a crow of triumph. "And Brick—every one of them's bigger 'n me."

"Well?" said Brick, unimpressed.

"Every one of them," gloated Martin.

"Never found a fellow my size to fight before—childhood sorrow, Brick—and now there's four of them. Four of them! An' Brick—they're all bigger 'n me—an' Brick, I'm going to fight 'em all!"

"Oh, my God!" said Brick, and tried to pull away, but Martin held him in a vise-like clutch.

"See, Brick—we'll follow them—they're going down to the Palm Hotel—that's where all the performers stay."

There was a narrow little street, deserted at that time of night, which led to that well-known hostelry, and it was there that Martin put his plan into action. Walking rapidly, he and Brick had just passed the Russians, who were absorbed in Russian conversation. Then, suddenly, he stopped, and the tallest Russian bumped into him from behind.

"Glumdalchitch!" remarked the tallest Russian, annoyedly, and extending a majestic arm, made as if to sweep Martin aside. Martin had trodden upon his corns in the jostle, and his corns were of dimensions with the rest of him and hurt proportionately.

"Say, where are you pushing?" said Martin in the tones of one unjustly aggrieved, and stepping forward, he trod heavily upon Russian corns anew.

With an angry bellow that sounded rather like "Buggle-wool!" the tallest Russian promptly attempted to smite Martin through the nearest wall. And then and there Brick Kenilworth, deposited in an ashcan by a gigantic arm at the start of the proceedings, resolved fervently that if his life should be spared this once, he would never touch a

cocktail-shaker again. For the next few moments were a whirling pinwheel of enormous arms and bodies thrashing together—an omelette of warring Titans. The Russians with that unanimity of purpose which Russians so rarely display, had fallen upon Martin as one avalanche, and blows that would have shaken an ox went hurtling through the air. But Martin, for the first time in his life was utterly and completely happy. The long-denied joy of clean battle against odds was his at last—his fist found worthy marks for the first time—and even as he sank to the ground with the breath nearly pounded out of him, he managed a smile. For above the pain in his lungs and the buzzing in his ears, he heard the voices of a crowd, for the first time addressed not to him but to his assailants—voices crying in scorn and reprobation: "Hey, you big stiff—lay off it—take a fellow your size!"

MARTIN unclosed one eye gingerly. He couldn't unclothe the other—he couldn't even wiggle his nose—for the rest of his face was swathed in bandages—but he was content.

"Lady to see you," said the white-capped nurse dubiously, "but I don't know if I'd better—"

"Let—her—in—you—don't—know—how—swell—I—feel," said Martin, through swollen lips.

"Well, as long as it's only a minute," said the nurse, still doubtfully, and opening the door, admitted a tiny and agitated tempest recognizable as Lila Landon.

"Oh, Martin—Martin darling!" said the tempest in a breaking voice, and then Martin had to shut his single eye again, because it seemed the only place she could kiss him.

Later: "But Martin darling—you do forgive me—you're sure?" the tempest was pleading.

"Sure," said the magnanimous Martin. "That's all right."

"But I was so horrid—and oh, Martin, I wish you'd killed that horrid little boy—and as for those awful Russians—oh, Martin, you were so brave to fight them—"

"Rats!" said Martin, but a smile came over his face beneath the bandages, and the eyelid of his one available eye drooped and opened again.

"Say," said Martin still later, "it doesn't matter really—but Lila, am I fired?"

"Fired?" said Lila indignantly. "Well, I should like to know just why—with Father on the discipline committee and everything—and besides, everybody knows how those big Russian monsters just picked on you till you had to fight. Mr. Kenilworth told Father just how it happened."

"Oh, Brick did, did he?" said Martin; and again his single workable eyelid drooped in what might have been a wink.

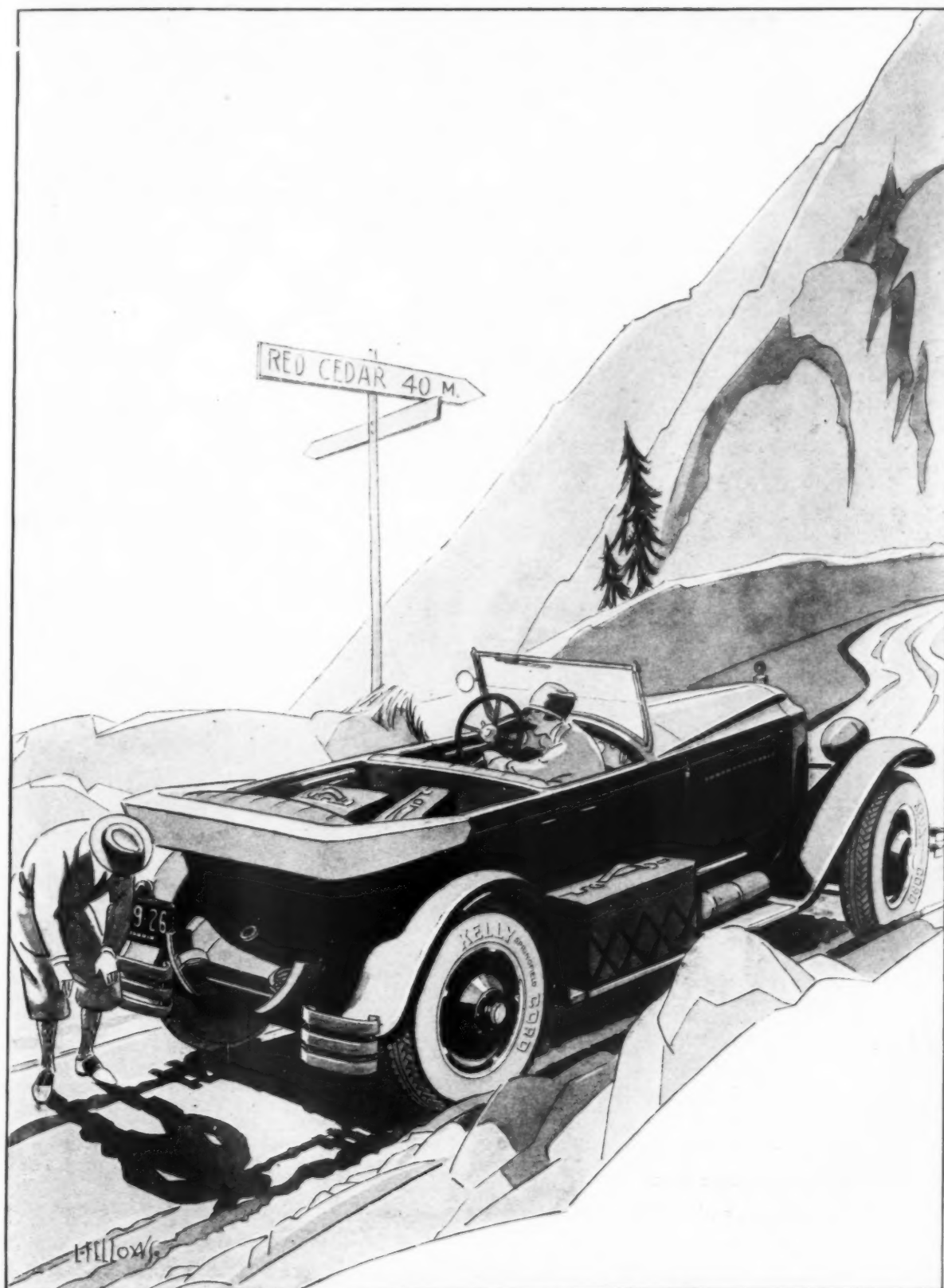
"And just look what the class sent you!" said Lila, tearing the wrappings from a long green florist's box. Within lay a set piece of roses, arranged in the shape of a club, and a card: "Three cheers for Martin the Giant-Killer—from 1926."

"Well," said Martin, and slowly raised his bandaged arms from his sides.

"Take a fellow your size!" giggled Lila—but he didn't mind. Ostentatiously the nurse looked the other way.

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